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Migration, Traces and the Poetics of Delay:

Exploring filmic forms to represent the Jewish  
Migrational Past of Kobe, Japan

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## Summary

This project concerns a Jewish community in the city of Kobe, Japan and its condition of memory/history. It attempts to create a film of this condition. The project consists of a written thesis and a 40min film. The written thesis describes the process of developing a creative strategy for the film.

There are already many films which choose migration as a subject. And because of the loose meaning of migration, different kind of topics are and can be labeled under migration. In this project, I attempt to make a film which is intrinsic to this case. My research process starts with fieldwork to understand this Jewish community. Through a 10 month period of fieldwork mainly in Kobe, Japan, I discovered the incompleteness of history or memory in this Jewish community. In other words, the fragility of their history and collective memory in this place. I set the research question for this project as: 'what kind of filmic form can respond to this incomplete memory/history condition?'

To address this research question, I first examine this fragility of memory and history through an interdisciplinary set of references, such as migration studies, memory studies, and urban studies. I argue that 'trace' is a useful concept in accessing a past, in spite of the incompleteness of history/memory in this place. I also conceptualize the idea of a geographical trace seeking to understand the nature of migrational traces.

I then move on to discussing how the idea of a material trace is not sufficient to adequately attend to this memory/history condition of the Jewish community in Kobe. I first paid attention to existing material traces such as the synagogue, but there is a limit to this approach since much has disappeared. These traces of the community that still exist and the invisible traces that don't anymore form a temporal layer of the city. Also, some of the traces were dispersed and located in other places, such as New York City and Washington, D.C. in the USA. These traces were also invisible in a sense that they are out of the purview from Kobe. The traces located in Kobe and found in New York City and Washington, D.C. form a geographical layer mediated by the experience of migration.

Based on this field examination, and also engaging with a corpus of films, documentary theory, and discussions in visual anthropology, I propose what I call a poetics of delay. This poetics of delay seeks to employ cinematic means to translate the condition of history/memory of the Jewish community in Kobe with its gaps and forms of invisibility. I argue that this poetics of delay can communicate the partiality and invisibility of the past through sustaining a literal delay in seeing and knowing within the viewer's experience. The aim of the film is not to provide an undisputed historical narrative of the Jewish community, though it does reflect on that history. Rather, it attempts to represent the difficulty of retrieving history and recovering memory through the medium of documentary film.

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Doing a PhD is essentially a process where you are on your own. But it is also definitely a process of appreciating that you are not alone.

## Statement

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:.....

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## Introduction

### Migration and film

This project focuses on a Jewish community in the city of Kobe, Japan, and its condition of memory and history. The project consists of a written thesis and a 40 min film. The written thesis describes the process of developing a creative strategy for the film which attempts to communicate this condition of memory and history.

Many films have focused on migration as a subject and different kinds of topics can be labelled under migration. A film can be about racism. A film can be about refugees. It can be a documentary or fiction. Film researchers such as Laura Marks (2000) and Hamid Naficy (2001) have already done extensive study on films that deal with issues relating to migration. Similarly in the discipline of visual anthropology, migration is a topic which is discussed by people such as Wilma Kiener (2006, 2008), to whose work I refer later in the thesis.

The film is about migration and an attempt to make a film which is intrinsic to this case of the Jewish community in Kobe. It is not a film which mechanically applies pre-established filmic conventions to the subject. To achieve these goals, this project starts with fieldwork to understand this Jewish community. In her book *Prosthetic Memory* (2004), memory studies researcher Alison Landsberg establishes a fundamental relationship between migration and film. She argues that film has historically served as a medium to sustain forms of collective memory for migrants in a US context. In Landsberg's argument, migration is more than just a subject for film; it even shapes

the way film functions in society. Unfortunately, the Jewish community of Kobe did not have films to serve as a vehicle for their collective memory. This project also examines how or if film can serve as a memory for this community.

Through a 10-month period of fieldwork, I discovered the incompleteness of history or memory in this Jewish community, in other words, the fragility of their history and memory. The research question for this project is: 'what kind of cinematic form can respond to this fragile memory/history condition?' I examine this fragility through an interdisciplinary set of references, such as migration studies, memory studies and urban studies. Based on this examination, and also engaging with past films, documentary theory, and discussions in visual anthropology, my intention is to invent a poetics of delay. This poetics of delay that I propose in the final chapter seeks to translate cinematically the condition of history/memory of the Jewish community. It should be noted that the aim of the film is not to provide a full historical narrative of the Jewish community though the film does reflect on its history. It attempts more to translate the difficulty of retrieving history and memory.

### [Affiliations and filiations](#)

Some studies and films based on the idea of diaspora and examination of a cinematic community revolve around the idea of an original home and assume a natural connection between a land and its people. This project does not rely on the idea of a natural connection between a land and its people. Perhaps the topic of a Jewish community connotes the idea even more. However, researchers on Jewish history and

culture, Daniel Boyarin and Janathan Borayin, examine the history of the Jewish Diaspora and argue that,

Indeed, we would suggest that Diaspora, and not monotheism, may be the most important contribution that Judaism has to make to the world, although we would not deny the positive role that monotheism has played in making Diaspora possible. Assimilating the lesson of Diaspora, namely that peoples and lands are not naturally and organically connected, could help prevent bloodshed such as that occurring in Eastern Europe today. (Boyarin and Boyarin, 1993, 723)

These researchers take the position that, to the larger world, the Jewish diaspora experience puts into question the seemingly natural connection between a land and its people. I follow this line of argument, and I focus on the seemingly 'unnatural' connection between the Jewish people and Japan. The discussions in Chapter 3, 4 and 5 presuppose this idea of non-organic connection between land and people.

### [Time and migration](#)

This project deals with the condition of history or memory for a Jewish community. However, migration is sometimes thought of as being antithetical to time. A historian of Japan and a cultural theorist, Harry Harootunian raises doubts about the trend of using spatial categories to explain social phenomena.

By appealing to enlarged, singular spatial categories - currently the global and empire dominates our agendas - the arena of social action has broadened and displaced other kinds of causality traditionally employed to

account for social phenomena. What had once been conceived as the things to be explained - the outcome of a historical process - has now been transformed into the explanation's premise. It is the larger, encompassing spaces, such as the globe and empire, that now explain the changing world of modernity rather than the reverse and that work against making a spatiotemporal problematic the basis of any explanation. (Harootunian, 2005, 24)

For Harootunian, this recession of the temporal as an explanation, affects the capacity for studying social phenomena, since we are left with only the spatial categories to explain what might be an effect of a historical process. His call for a reunion of the spatial and temporal is a call for correction of this crippling trend. In his view, the obsession over the spatial study of migration is a symptom of this recession of the temporal: 'This particular awareness has been manifested in the now overwhelming interest in tracking what moves between discrete spatial boundaries and across them' (Harootunian, 2005, 23).

The geographer Doreen Massey also identifies the same trend in migrant studies and connects it to the fixation on the spatial, the geographical:

...it has led to 'the migrant' becoming the iconic figure of our times (and above all indeed the international migrant since only they cross the boundaries of constituted space). What is happening here is that the

couple stasis: change has been reduced to geographical settlement:  
geographical movement. (Massey, n.d.)

Indeed, migration researcher Saulo B. Cwerner shows that the temporal side of migration has been under-researched, confirming Harootunian and Massey's concerns (Cwerner, 2001). However, that the drive towards the attention to migration has been fueled by the obsession with the spatial doesn't mean that the temporal dimension of migration has gone. It only means that the spatial part of migration has been receiving more attention than the temporal. By dealing with the issue of knowing the history or memory of the Jewish community, I aim for a reunion of time and space.

#### [Written part of the thesis](#)

In chapter 1, I discuss the methodological issues surrounding the project. I explain how the research process is structured and how an interdisciplinary approach animates this structure. Making a film to portray the migratory condition of a Jewish community is already a methodological choice. The question of using film as a mode of investigation will be discussed at the end of chapter 6.

In chapter 2, I briefly explain the context of Kobe through its histories of migration and then move on to talk about my fieldwork experience in the city. The experience in Kobe turned out to be different from what I foresaw. I expected the existence of a tight knit community where the memory/history of the community would be kept alive, but what I found was a different situation. Much of the collective memory or

history of the Jews in Kobe seemed to be dislocated or lost. I first question this unexpected situation. Also, I question what kind of film can be made or should be made given this challenging situation. These creative queries are the project's research questions. The following chapters, 3, 4, and 5, develop my analysis of this situation; I subsequently develop the notion of a poetics of delay as a creative strategy from an understanding which I advance in these chapters.

In Chapter 3, I propose the idea of a trace to understand the migratory condition of the Jewish community of Kobe. Though there is little memory or organized and documented history of this community, this absence does not mean that the community does not have a past. I develop and analyze the concept of the trace to address this fragility of memory and history. The concept of the trace is usually considered a temporal one. I draw on past theorizations of the trace and suggest how the treatment of trace in the discipline of archaeology is quite similar and relevant to my project. Another aspect of the trace is its fragmentariness, which I describe because it is also essential for this project. Having described the commonsensical ideas of the trace, I then explore the spatial sense of the trace. Traces are not usually seen in a spatial sense, but for this project about migration, the spatial sense of the trace must be recognized to understand the dynamics of migratory traces. I conclude chapter 3 by arguing that the idea of a trace can provide an intellectual solution to the binary scheme of movement and fixity that dominates the academic discussion on migration. Migration is usually associated with a celebration of movement and thus is contrasted to the fixity of place. I argue that this scheme is not helpful in understanding the fixity of migration. The idea of the trace, after one considers its spatial sense, can



deconstruct the binary opposition of movement and place and facilitate a richer understanding of diaspora.

In chapter 4, I discuss the issue of context in this project. Migration always involves the issue of context, but in this case the context raises some fundamental issues regarding this project. The lack of memory or documented history of the Jews of Kobe means that it is difficult to establish a context in terms of the Jewish community on its own terms. Also, because this history of the community also involved the transit of Jewish refugees to Kobe from Eastern Europe during the Second World War, I had to make decisions about whether the focus of the film should be on the history of the community or the history of the refugees. The reasons for these creative decisions are discussed.

In chapter 5, I examine the material context of this project, which is one of urban space. I go on to describe the dominant mode of academic discussions of migration and urban space. I argue that this mode of understanding migration and urban space has certain limits and that employing the concept of the trace introduces both a temporal and a larger spatial sense to the discussion. One theorist who exemplifies such an association is Dolores Hayden. In an American context, Hayden puts together the idea of trace, urban space, and, to some extent, migration (Hayden, 1997).

However, Hayden's book is not without its limits, and I discuss the limits of her argument. The first limitation is that in her argument, the idea of layers of the city, apparent in other theories of urban memory, seems to be missing. Another limitation is that, even though she talks about migration, her study offers no sense of the

geographical trace that I discuss in the first chapter. Finally, I consider the problems of retrieval and representation of the urban past. I clarify the difference between the trace and layers, and how the trace is a condition arising from the concept of urban space and its layers. This understanding of urban space through gaps and layers leads me to the actual poetics of the film, which I will discuss in chapter 6.

In chapter 6, I respond to the discussions of chapters 3, 4, and 5 and ask what kind of poetics is required to represent this migratory situation. I start by going through visual anthropology's ideas on migration. These discussions hint at how migration might be represented although ultimately do not correspond to the reality I discussed in the previous chapters. Next, I draw on Sara Cooper's argument concerning ethics in film. In her examination of a cinematic ethics, she suggests how cinematic space can be a place where a gap of seeing and knowing can be performed. Developing her idea on seeing filmic space as such, I present the poetics of delay, whereby seeing and knowing do not happen instantly and the viewers are sensitized in this gap between them. I conclude the chapter by discussing the issues of knowledge that emerge from such poetics and how I rediscovered film as an appropriate media to execute such a poetics.

### [The filmed part of the thesis](#)

The film is an execution of the poetics of delay that I propose in the final chapter of the thesis. The title of the film, *Passing On*, conveys the multiple meanings that are intended for the film and the project. I intended three meanings for this title. The first meaning is associated with movement. The film deals with Jewish migration: the movement of people who passed through the city of Kobe. The second meaning is

death. In the film, I touch upon the passing away of Jewish migrants, and one section of the film is dedicated to the Jewish cemetery in Kobe, which is the only active Jewish cemetery in Japan. Both the movement and death of the Jewish migrants seemed to have had effects on the conservation of their memories/histories. The third meaning is the passing of knowledge. Because the transmission of memory/history has been complicated by people's movements and deaths, the passing of knowledge takes on important meaning for the community.

## Chapter 1: Discussions on Research Methodology

In this chapter, I will discuss the methodological issues involved in this project.

However, in this chapter I will examine the more practical aspects; the more epistemological concerns will be diffused across the thesis.

This project is based on fieldwork. I will base the film on the experience and findings of my fieldwork. In this sense, the project has the dimension of not only practice-led research but research-led practice as well. Researchers Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean argue that these two patterns of activity are not separate but are interconnected (Smith and Dean, 2009, 8). In my project, too, the fieldwork and its interpretations play a big role in creating the film.

The written part of the project mostly describes how I arrived at the creative decisions regarding the film. It roughly follows the three conditions which architect and theorist Paul Carter suggests that an 'invention' respond to in terms of practice-based research. Carter sees 'invention' as a property that is common between language-based and image-based arts and that should be the focus of creative research.

Invention also implies the possibility of reintegrating different strands of knowledge into art. Since my research process involved incorporating different knowledge types, I found Carter's theorization useful in guiding my research process. He argues that an invention has to 'describe a forming situation', 'articulate the discursive and plastic intelligence of materials' and 'establish the necessity of design' (Carter, 2009, 21). My project's research process is divided into three stages and follows these three

conditions that Carter suggests. The chapters present the three stages in a chronological manner but refer to previous chapters to clarify the issue under discussion.

## 1. The fieldwork and shooting process

The description of fieldwork corresponds to what Paul Carter suggests as ‘describing a forming situation.’ A situation means ‘both the attitude of the artist and the social context in which the work (the project) emerges’ (Carter, 2009, 21). Chapter 2 of the written thesis describes the experience of the fieldwork in detail.

For this project, I conducted a 10-month period of fieldwork which took place largely in Kobe, Japan. I rented a house in Osaka, which is about an hour away from Kobe, and visited Kobe by train. My fieldwork consisted of ethnography, interviews and archival work. The filming was done during my stay there. I didn’t have a research assistant or a film crew. I also went to New York City, USA, and Washington, D.C., USA, to do some additional research and filming.

In New York City, USA, I met up with David Moche, a former resident of Kobe who organizes a blog for Kobe’s Jewish community. He appears throughout the film. I filmed and interviewed him and his mother. I also filmed a Synagogue in Brooklyn which was apparently an inspiration for the Synagogue in Kobe.

In Washington, D.C., USA, I went to the Holocaust Memorial Museum where I could find many traces of the Jewish community of Kobe. I did some archival work and conducted an interview with Susan Bachrach, who works at the museum.

Most of the footage was taken during this fieldwork period, except for some reshoots that were done in the final stage. In the reshoots I was unable to do the filming myself, so I asked a friend from Japan and a friend from New York City to help me film the material that I needed. I discuss the issues and implications involved in reshooting some footage in the conclusion.

By a forming situation, Carter not only means an 'objective' situation but also something which includes the artist him/herself. I, too, reflect on my position on researching and analyzing the situation of the Jewish community of Kobe at the end of chapter 2.

## 2. Analyzing the fieldwork and footage

This stage covers what Paul Carter calls 'describing a forming situation' and '[articulating] the discursive and plastic intelligence of materials.' Chapters 3, 4 and 5 correspond to this stage. The conceptualization of the trace in chapter 3 and the discussion of urban space in chapter 5 correspond to what Carter describes as articulating the intelligence of materials. By examining the fieldwork experience, I identify the research questions for the project. The research question is 'what kind of

creative strategy can respond to the incompleteness of memory/history of the Jewish community of Kobe?’ The analysis of the fieldwork is done through an interdisciplinary reference. I engage with the fields of migration studies, memory studies, urban studies to draw out what this case means. The already rich literature on migration, memory and the urban space ranging from humanities to social science allowed me to understand this case in a more sophisticated and nuanced way. Also, this interdisciplinary inquiry places my project in relation to other disciplines of knowledge. Because the interdisciplinary inquiry for my case also informs my creative decisions, one could argue that the film itself is not only a product of knowledge from different disciplines but also a product of my attempt to negotiate between these disciplines.

### 3. Editing process of the film

Following the fieldwork analysis, I draw on the literature of visual anthropology, documentary film theory and past films to discuss the film’s creative strategy. This process corresponds to what Carter calls ‘the necessity of design’.

I engage with the literature on visual anthropology because migration has been a topic within the discipline and because their discussion is a generative discussion on what kind of representations there should be about migration. Practice-based researcher Graeme Sullivan takes a critical stance towards visual anthropology, arguing that it does not accommodate the needs of people working in the visual arts (Sullivan, 2005). In my research, I find the anthropological literature a useful site for starting a

discussion because it specifically deals with issues of migration. I believe visual anthropology offers insights into the space between theorization and practice in regards to representing migration.

I also draw on documentary film theory and a discussion of past films to arrive at a creative strategy for my film. The interdisciplinary approach that I perform in this process is different from the previous chapters in that it is not employed to understand the case-study but rather to directly generate material decisions regarding the film. This creative strategy is a culmination of the discussion and research process which I describe in the previous chapters. For example, the issue of 'invisibility' and 'gaps' is identified in chapter 5, and in chapter 6, I propose a 'poetics of delay' which attends and responds to these invisibilities and gaps. This poetics of delay present in my work is described by comparing this to past films which engage with similar issues of representation.

A researcher on aesthetics and the philosophy of practice-based research, Clive Cazeux argues for an approach on how interdisciplinarity could generate knowledge in practice-based research drawing on philosopher Kant's theory of knowledge.

...the process of working between subjects or disciplines creates, and arguably necessitates, occasions for negotiation between domains, and it is the tangled network of resistances and new possibilities which emerges from the negotiation, in the form of artefacts and commentary,...  
(Cazeux, 2008, 33)



On the whole, my film is a product of negotiating between different subjects and disciplines, and chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 describe the process which leads to the film's final form.

## Chapter 2: The Fieldwork Experience and Ensuing Questions

In this chapter, I describe the context of the city, Kobe, and detail the fieldwork experience. Then I move on to identify the questions that arose from my field experience. My enquiry informs the creative decisions regarding the film, both in terms of form and content.

### [The context of Kobe](#)

I will focus on the migrational histories/memories of the city and how the city remembers these histories. Kobe city is located at Japan's mid-West and is the capital of Hyogo Prefecture, which is the seventh largest prefecture in Japan. It is situated between the Rokko Mountains in the north and Osaka Bay in the south.



Figure 1 Kobe Map, created by Step Map

It is commonly treated in conjunction with the cities of Osaka and Kyoto, the other two big cities of the Kansai area.<sup>1</sup> The city's population is about 1,535,000 at the moment (Kobe City, 2016). It is a city which is considered to have a cosmopolitan feel. What kinds of elements contribute to such a feeling? The migrant population of the city and the traces that migrants have left are among those elements.

Kobe was one of the first cities to open up to foreign trade when Japan's isolationist (sakoku) policies ended in 1868. Trade existed between countries such as the Netherlands during the isolationist period, but in general, trade was forbidden with foreign countries; no foreigners were allowed to enter, and no Japanese people were allowed to leave the country from 1639 to 1868.<sup>2</sup> In 1858, the Ansei Treaties among Japan, the United States, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and Russia resulted in the Kobe port being among several to be opened. When the Kobe port was fully opened in 1868, Western traders and their Chinese employees started business relations with the Japanese. This interaction made Kobe one of the first areas in Japan where it was possible to experience western cultures. Some of the features of western cultures which have become popular in modern Japan were first introduced in Kobe. Some examples are golf and film theatres (Kobe Gaikokujin Kyoryuchi Kenkyukai (ed), 2005). According to Hui:

The people of Kobe pride themselves on the pioneering role of their ancestors in mediating between Japan and the West in early Meiji and subsequently in developing the city into a hub of maritime activity in East Asia. (Hui, 2008, 148)

The migration of the western traders and their Chinese employees led to the formation of two areas in modern Kobe. One is an area called the Ijingai (Foreigner's town). The opening of the Kobe port created a demand for a residential area where westerners could live, and some of these houses were concentrated in an area now called Kitanocho. Some of the buildings of that time are still preserved, and they are displayed for tourists. The buildings which are shown today include the consulates of China and Panama and houses lived in by people from the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark and Britain. (Kobe Kitano Ijinkangai, n.d.)



*Figure 2 Kitano, Kobe. frame grab from footage*

Though Kitanocho is a tourist destination now, this only happened quite recently. When a popular 1976 TV show called 'Kazamidori' used Kitanocho as its theatrical setting, the area became popular, and soon the city realized its potential as a resource for tourism (Sakamoto, 2000, 29). Now it seems to be a popular destination for foreigners as well as Korean and Chinese people. In the beginning of the film, I show the old consulates and how the tourists now flock to see them.

Another remnant of the city of that time is Kobe Chinatown. Chinatown in Kobe started when the Chinese were forced to settle in an area called the 'area of mixed residence'. Although the presence of westerners was guaranteed by formal treaties at that time, China had no similar agreement with Japan. The Chinese were not allowed to live in the foreigner's residential area, and as non- Japanese, they could not live among the Japanese population. Chinatown as it is today was built on the 'area of mixed residence'. Now, Chinatown is considered a landmark and major tourist attraction in the city of Kobe. The Chinese diaspora still keeps its presence in the city to this day (Hui, 2008).

As Kobe is a large port, it served as a site for emigration as well. The Kobe Center for Overseas Migration and Cultural Interaction displays how the Japanese migrated to countries in South America, especially Brazil. In fact, the building on which the museum was built was used to house Japanese people before their overseas departure. The building itself was built in 1928, and though it functioned as a training facility for the Japanese army during the wartime, the building also served as a place for emigrants to stay before their voyages until 1971, when it was shut down. At present, the building also serves as a meeting place for the Kansai Brazilian Community which aims to help Brazilians (which likely would include Japanese Brazilians) living in the Kansai area (Kobe Center for Overseas Migration and Cultural Interaction, n.d.)

The museum I mentioned above managed to survive the disaster, but when we look at the history of the city, we cannot neglect the Hanshin Awaji Earthquake which struck the city on 17<sup>th</sup> of Jan, 1995, and killed 4,571 people (Kobe City, 2015). The earthquake was not only a catastrophe for the city but was also remembered by the whole nation.

The intensity of the earthquake reminded people of another earthquake, the Kanto Earthquake that happened in the Tokyo area in 1923. It is said that the number of deaths rose to almost 105,000 people (Bosai, n.d.). The Kanto Earthquake is not only remembered for its damage but also for the fact that many Korean migrants were killed by the Japanese people in the earthquake's aftermath.<sup>3</sup> However, such an incident did not happen after the earthquake in 1995, in spite of the large Korean population still present in Kobe. Instead, stories were told of how different ethnic groups cooperated after the earthquake. For example, a church in Kobe served as a hub for such cooperation among different ethnic groups after the catastrophe, and these activities led to the establishment of an NGO called the Takatori Community Center. Now the center consists of eight organizations including those that help the Spanish speaking population and the Vietnamese population in Kobe. It can be said that the center is a monument in memory of intercommunal cooperation after the catastrophe.<sup>4</sup>

Another site, which silently attests to the city's history of migration, is the Foreigners' Cemetery (Gaijin Bochi). This grave site is reserved exclusively for foreigners who had been residents of the city. The cemetery is not open to the public, and only relatives or people connected to each religious community are allowed to enter. The layout of the cemetery is largely organized by religion, namely Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and consists of approximately 2700 graves (Kobe City, 2014). The cemetery is still operative to this day and is the only active Jewish cemetery in Japan. One important thing to note is that some of the older graves lack information about the deceased's religion, which makes it impossible to identify to the deceased's belief. Thus, although they might not

be placed in the Jewish area, other non-recognized Jews might be buried in the cemetery as well.

How does the Jewish community of Kobe fit into these histories and memories? Using my research findings, I will outline the community's history briefly to inform the reader. However, the project's major question centers round the possibility of access to the past.

Looking at the graves at the Jewish cemetery, I could confirm that the oldest deceased person passed away in Kobe in 1898. This date does mean that a Jewish person lived in Kobe at that time, but it is not evidence of an existence of a community.<sup>5</sup> According to Rabbi David, the Rabbi of the community when I did fieldwork from 2012 to 2013, the community started to form when David Sassoon and Esra Choueke, both traders from Syria, came to Kobe around 1910. After the Kanto earthquake, Jewish people who lived in Yokohama, a city close to Tokyo, moved to Kobe, forming part of the community. The community before the Second World War, seemed to have been divided into an Ashkenazi Jewish community and a Sephardic Jewish community. The terms Sephardi and Ashkenazi, in a broad sense, are applied to describe different liturgic and religious-legal traditions. Sephardi traditions developed in Spain and the Middle East. Ashkenazi traditions developed in northern and Eastern Europe (Efron, Weitzman and Lehman, 2014, 213). This division can be confirmed by the stories collected and edited by Mr. David Moche who was born in Kobe in 1950 and moved to New York City in 1968 (Moche, n.d.). This division can also be verified by the interviews of the Jewish

refugees who passed through Kobe during the Second World War (Museum, U.H.M.M. 2001).

Independent of the situation of Jews who lived in Japan during the Second World War, a Japanese diplomat, Chiune Sugihara, who was stationed in Lithuania, gave out transit visas to the Jewish people who came to the consulate to obtain means to escape Europe. It is said that he gave out almost 2100 visas. The refugees entered the port of Tsuruga (a city north of Kobe) and moved on to Kobe to stay. According to Shilony:

they were permitted to stay as transit passengers in Japan, mainly in Kobe for as long as they needed, and those who could find no other place to go were allowed to settle in Hongkew, the Japanese controlled section of Shanghai. (Shilony, 1992:185)

Shilony's account is not correct. These people mostly stayed in Kobe for around six months and were forced to move afterwards. Probably the first major attempt to record the history of Jews who passed through Kobe was an exhibition called 'Flight and Rescue' that was held in the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., in 2001 (Museum, U.H.M.M. 2001). This exhibition was possible mainly because many of the refugees moved to the U.S. when the war was over and decided to give testimony or to donate records to the museum. Many of their documents and artifacts are owned by the museum now.<sup>6</sup> The present community that exists in Kobe seems to be more connected with the Sephardic community of that time. According to Rabbi David, the current community holds about 200 members. The synagogue which exists in Kitanocho performs its ritual in a Sephardic style. Though the synagogue claims to be orthodox, the community seems undecided about whether it should be strictly an orthodox



community or not. The community also seems conflicted about whether to be closed or open. The present synagogue functions as a hub for the current community; furthermore, the people who come are not necessarily only from Kobe but also from the wider area of Kansai. The synagogue was rebuilt in 1970 in Kitancho, and one of the contributors who made rebuilding happen was David Moche's father. Before 1970, an older synagogue existed on the same site. According to David Moche, the new synagogue was designed by a Japanese architect who studied the designs of synagogues in New York City at that time. The synagogue survived the earthquake in 1995, though we can see the traces of the earthquake in the cracks marked on the tablet. However, the earthquake prompted foreigners in Kobe to leave, and the size of the Jewish community shrank. Also, the composition of the community seemed to change dramatically after the earthquake. Also, notably, as Dalia Anavian explains in the section on the synagogue, the community sought help from the HaBaD movement for funding the synagogue after the earthquake. The HaBaD is an Orthodox Hasidic movement which is the largest of the contemporary Hasidic sects (Efron, Weitzman and Lehman, 2014, 290). Ms. Dalia was born in Iran and came to Kobe with her parents in 1972. She is nostalgic for the community before the Habad influence, which in her eyes was much more cosmopolitan than it is now (Anavian, n.d.). The photo of when Prince Mikasa (member of the Imperial family of Japan) visited the Synagogue (1987) is a memory of those days. She talks about this photo in section 1.

### [The fieldwork experience](#)

To describe my fieldwork experience, I believe it would be helpful to relate how I came to have the idea of making this film. I encountered a photo in the exhibition at The

National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, Japan, in 2003. This photo was of a Jewish refugee who stayed for a few months in Kobe, Japan, around 1941, and it was taken by Yasuji Nakai, a member of an amateur group of photographers in Kobe.



*Figure 3 'Displaced Jews: Window' (Yasui 1941) Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art*

I remember the feeling of being shocked to find that there were refugees who had come to Japan and stayed in Kobe. The shock came from being unaware that this happened in Kobe. The idea of Jewish refugees coming to Japan during the war seemed improbable because Japan and Germany were allies at that time. I soon learned that there was a Japanese Diplomat called Chiune Sugihara who gave out visas to Polish refugees while he was stationed in Lithuania.<sup>7</sup> I had the idea of making a documentary of this history, focusing on the city of Kobe rather than the person, Mr.

Sugihara, but after some research, I did not follow through with the idea. Although I had gone to a film school and already knew the technical aspects of making a film, to put it simply, I didn't think I knew how to execute this idea, and I wasn't ready to tackle it. I did find out that there was a Jewish community in Kobe and an active synagogue.<sup>8</sup>

After some years, I did my MA at Sussex University for a degree in Migration Studies in 2009/2010. Though I learned many things, I left unsatisfied about how migration studies didn't seem to pay much attention to the issues associated with the representation of migration/migrants. The discussions on representation that existed seemed to focus on ways to visualize the statistical flow of migration or criticism of racism in media. Therefore, when I started thinking about a project for my PhD, I decided to revisit the idea of a film on Kobe's Jewish community, believing that I could attend to this gap. Before starting my MA, I already had experience in filmmaking and was working in media. Combining my background in film and my studies in migration, my initial idea was to look specifically into the memories of the current Jewish community in Kobe and find out how that community remembered the arrival and stay of the refugees. As I have shown, photos of their presence in the city exist from that time, but those photos do not indicate how the community remembered those refugees. Were there particular events that happened here which are unknown outside of the community? And how does one show these memories and histories ? To come to understand the community's point of view seemed like a valuable contribution to knowledge.<sup>9</sup>

In November 2012, I started my fieldwork in Kobe, Japan, which took almost 10 months in total. I did not actually live in the city of Kobe, but in the city of Osaka, roughly an hour away by train. I had already been in touch with David Moche, a former resident of Kobe, before beginning my fieldwork, and I decided the first point of field entry would be the synagogue that existed in Kobe. David Moche had already created a website dedicated to collecting stories of the Jewish community of Kobe.<sup>10</sup> I started talking to people who came to the synagogue on the Sabbath about the community's history in Kobe. Shortly after, I began to realize that members of the current Jewish community did not remember much about what had happened during the war. Some of them had never seen the photos that I discussed above. It seemed that although the Jewish migrants established a community in Kobe in the 1930s before the arrival of refugees in 1941, the current members of the community had little memory/history of that event. The refugees who passed through Kobe did not stay in Japan for long, and most of them moved to Shanghai and eventually to the US. There was no one who had stayed in Kobe among the refugees. Thus, the current members of the Jewish community had no direct connections with the wartime refugees. Moreover, it became clear that the current Jewish community didn't have much memory/history of their presence in Kobe, let alone the event of the refugees' arrival. When I went to Kobe, I expected the members of the Jewish community to have rich memories and know their history in the city. However, I learned that most of them did not have memories or knowledge of their history. In terms of memory/history, the migrants were in a position similar to mine, with limited access to the details of their community.

Having an unanticipated discovery during fieldwork is very common and in fact is seen as a sign of good fieldwork. However, this lack of access to historical resources made me confused and presented me with many questions regarding what kind of film could be made or should be made, for that matter.

How was I supposed to make a film of a community's history when little or no memory or history existed? At that point, I had a discussion with my supervisor Ben Highmore about the project. I wasn't sure whether the project was feasible in the first place. Ben told me of the example of the African American Diaspora and its relation to history. Even if the African American diaspora in the U.S. might try to trace its history back to the African continent, that history would be difficult to trace because of the lack of 'evidence'. In a lecture in London, the African American writer James Baldwin carefully addressed this problem with a story about how he wasn't able to identify 'where he was from' if he were asked (Ove, 1969). The book *Lose your Mother*, by African American literature and history scholar Saidiya Hartman, is her account of trying to re-trace the Atlantic slave route. She goes to Ghana, though her actual ancestors did not come from Ghana. The lineage had been lost, and the book rests on this difficulty (Hartman, 2008). However, that loss does not mean that the past didn't exist. This suggestion allowed me to refocus my fieldwork around the theme of migration and an invisible past, both its absence and existence. Of course, in the African American diaspora, slavery erased the historical and geographical past. However, just as the lack of historical evidence for the African American diaspora was part of the diasporic experience, the lack of Jewish community's history or memory helped me understand

that this very lack constitutes their condition. In this light, I began to see this case as an intellectually and creatively challenging project, a realization that prompted me to question the practice of filmmaking as well.

### Research Questions

After finishing the fieldwork, I reformulated my research question as ‘what kind of style of film can respond to the lack of history/memory regarding migration?’ I break up the question into three parts as identified below. The questions directly or indirectly relate to the issue of representation. These questions of course are not isolated. For example, understanding of the migratory situation would evoke responses to what kind of films might be made on the topic.

#### 1. How can we understand this migratory situation?

The condition of the Jewish community raised questions regarding memory, history and movement. To better understand this situation, I needed to analyze and clarify these questions. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 attempt to examine this situation.

#### 2. What kind of film could I make to address migratory condition? And what kind of film should I make out of such a condition?

The lack of memory and history in this case meant that I could not make a film in a linear manner, showing what I had discovered. How then would I represent these lost or invisible histories or memories?

Also this migratory condition raised questions which are not just epistemological but ethical as well. Is it right to construct a historical narrative as if I were in a position to possess this knowledge? This aspect will be covered mainly in chapter 6 regarding the poetics of the film.

### 3. What is my position in this situation?

Before I move on to the next chapter, I would like to clarify my position as an artist/researcher in terms of this project. To do so, I present the idea of accented cinema proposed by the film researcher Hamid Naficy. In his book *An Accented cinema*, Hamid Naficy examines a range of films created by exilic and diasporic filmmakers in the West and identifies similar features, such as epistolarity.<sup>11</sup> In this sense, accented cinema is not only defined by the formal styles of film but also by the filmmaker (Naficy, 2001).

The question I would like to raise here is as follows: can I define my film as accented cinema? I was born in Japan, and now I am studying in the UK. In the UK, I could be loosely called a 'migrant', being an international student here. Also, the area in Japan where I shot my film is not where I grew up, so in that sense also I am a migrant in terms of lacking immediate familiarity with my field situation. However, I would feel

uncomfortable using the term exilic or diasporic to refer to myself because I did not experience either rupture or coercion. I can go back to Japan any time, and with a student visa, I can move between Japan and the UK without significant inconvenience. In this sense, I don't think my film can be called accented cinema as Naficy defines it. However, the subject of the film is a Jewish community, and the film deals at some length with the Jewish refugee experience. My film would not originate in a personal experience of diaspora or exile but would deal with some relevant conditions.

However, that I am not a diasporic or an exilic subject does not mean that I as an artist/researcher have nothing in common with the people of that community. Being a researcher of this community did not give me a superior position in terms of knowledge. As I have discussed, I discovered the difficulty of unearthing the Jewish community's memories or histories. But what if I had started this project 20 years ago? I might have figured out and found the memories of the Jewish community more easily. The fact that I started this project in 2012 influenced this project and the film. If I were compared to Mr. Moche, the person who organized the website to collect the Jewish community's stories, in terms of ethnicity, we would appear different. However, in terms of our position in time and the limits that time imposes, we found ourselves on a similar plane. Indeed, he told me that he wished me to go into the Japanese archives to search for the Jewish history of Kobe. In a way, we were colleagues on a similar mission. The anthropologist Johannes Fabian, critical of the way ethnography was written, argued that ethnography often erases the coequality of the researcher and the subject. In a way, my project follows up on this insight and does not try to erase the fact that I as a researcher/artist and the people I research are



under the same time frame (Fabian, 2002). I believe keeping this fact in mind is a step toward achieving the time/space integration that I touched on through Harootunian's ideas in the introduction.

This question of my positionality also has wider implications in terms of globalization and migration. Throughout my research, I was asked again and again why I decided to do this project. The implication was why would I, as a Japanese person be interested in such research. The answer lies in the nature of the topic itself. Skoller analyzes the film *Persistence* (Eisenberg dir.1997) which deals with the Jewish history/memory of Berlin and states:

A work of art such as *Persistence*, a single authored film made by an American Jew about Berlin, also raises the question of the individual voice speaking in relation to notions of nationality that are changing in the current period of globalization. If globalization is the undoing of national boundaries, creating a hybridization of cultures and identities, it becomes harder for anyone to claim a national history as simply his or her own. (Skoller, 2005, 91)

In terms of my own project, I could ask a similar question: who has the authority to talk about the Jewish community of Kobe? The point of my question is that if migration and globalization imply hybridization and the movement of people, then they complicate the issue of authority as well. Even in the case of the Jewish community of Kobe, Mr. Moche, who was organizing the search for the city's memory/history, was no longer a resident of Kobe. Does he have the authority to talk about Kobe now? The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum had many documents pertaining to the Jewish community of Kobe. But why does the museum own the documents of which

even the current community members are unaware? I do not intend to answer these questions in my project. Rather, I see these questions as descriptive of the memory/history condition of the community whereby the authority of memory/history has been complicated by migration. Coming back to the reasons why I would research such a topic, I would say that my doing the research corresponds to the nature of the situation I want to describe. The difficulty in addressing the authority of memory is a crucial part of this project, and reducing our theoretical lenses to ethnicity would limit our ability to examine this difficulty.

### **Chapter 3: What is this situation? Movement and Traces**

In this chapter, I examine the relationship between movement and history/memory, and I propose the trace to access a past. Memory and identity are popular topics of research, and theorists of memory such as Pierre Nora and Maurice Halbwachs have treated memory as something which leads to the identity formation of a collectivity. However, my project does not primarily address the identity formation of a Jewish community.<sup>1</sup> Part of the reason for that choice is that, apparently, in Kobe, not enough memory existed to develop and sustain a sense of identity or belonging in the first place. Similarly, in some cases, identity issues emerge for the migrant under discussion because the migrant has moved from one place to another. Jewish migration to Japan is not an obvious combination of ethnicity and place, so the expectations for a study of Jewish identity might be even higher. However, that is not this project's focus.<sup>2</sup>

#### [History, Memory and Trace](#)

So why did the current Jewish community have so little memory or history of their presence in Kobe? I would identify three main reasons. Firstly, the people who remembered had moved away from Kobe, so newcomers had little chance to access their memories. The very movement of the people made the transmission of memory/history difficult. Secondly, many of the people who had lived in Kobe and had memory had passed away, making the transmission of their memories impossible. And thirdly, no sustained effort occurred to keep record of what had happened

independent of the population's memories. For these reasons, the current community was put in a state of limbo in terms of their memory/history condition, as it were.

The absence of memory or acknowledged history does not mean the absence of a past. Of course, the Jewish migrants had a past in the city of Kobe. A past exists as a virtuality, but concrete history or memory is lacking. The Deleuzian feminist Elisabeth Grosz tries to theorize the concept of a past distinct from memory or history.

The past is the virtuality that makes both history and memory possible. Neither history nor memory should be equated with the past itself. As latency or virtuality, the past is larger, more complex, more laden than any history can present... (Grosz, 2012, 18)

Perhaps Grosz's theorization is too Bergsonian/ Deleuzian in assuming the existence of virtuality, but from this conceptualization, I would like to appropriate the insight that the lack of memory or history does not mean an absence of the past. Rather, the past is the condition of memory and history. This kind of conceptualization of the past lets us imagine that we may access such a past. How do we access such a past? In contrast to memory and history, I propose the trace. I will articulate how the trace can function as a way to access the past, even without the fullness of memory or history.

How is the idea of trace useful in this particular condition where memory and history are lacking? In the debate of memory and history, the two are sometimes presented in a contrasting mode. The French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who introduced the idea of a 'collective memory,' argued that any personal memory was socially framed.

He also contrasts memory and history, writing that 'general history starts only when tradition ends and the social memory is fading or breaking up...' (Halbwachs, 1980, 78).

The French historian Pierre Nora also emphasizes the importance of memory over history. Nora writes, 'Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name...History on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete of what is no longer' (Nora, 1989, 8). However, in our time, 'there are *lieux de memoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory' (Nora, 1989, 7). Both share the idea that memory and history are mutually exclusive.

Aleida Assman, who is the originator of the concept of 'cultural memory', argues that this kind of opposition is untenable and suggests that we should see memory and history as two modes of cultural memory. Memory is located as functional memory, and history is located as storage memory.

The fundamental step that will take us beyond the confines of either polarization or equation of memory and history is the idea that inhabited memory and uninhabited memory are complementary and not contradictory. We can call the former 'functional' and we can identify its main features as being group related, selective, normative, and future oriented. By comparison, historical scholarship is as it were, secondhand, it feeds on past memories and in new ways reconstructs that which has lost its living relevance to the present. This 'memory of past memories' is what I would like to call 'storage memory.' (Assman, 2012, 123-124)

The reconciliation of memory and history by Assman certainly goes beyond the sometimes futile debate concerning memory and history. However, how do these discussions and formulations apply to the Jewish community in Kobe? What if there

were little memory or history in the first place? Should we abandon the search for the past? If the term memory suggests a subject (be that an individual or a collective) who remembers, then in this case, there were not many subjects who remembered. Also, if the term “history” suggested an organized record of and reconstruction of the past as Nora and Jassman state, then history was lacking, too. In this sense, the case of my project seemed to escape the discussions concerning memory or history.

Also, notably, although Jewish migrants are definitely a tiny minority in Japan, their lack of memory/history did not seem to be an effect of power relations. On a larger scale, one could argue that they were not still part of the narrative of the nation, but from the account of the local historian of Kobe, Mr. Iwata, who also appears in the film, the absence seemed more about the lack of will to preserve memory and history, as I already pointed out. Therefore, the prevalent opposition of the people’s memory and the official history doesn’t seem to fit here either. Indeed, there was no official past to fight with. Also, as I point out in chapter 2 and suggest in the beginning of the film, the Kitancho-area in Kobe is especially where the city tries to preserve its cosmopolitan past by preserving old houses. The lack of attention from local authorities seemed to come from the fact that nobody looked at the area’s history from a Jewish point of view. In the UK context, when E.P. Thompson proposed a history from below approach, the innovation lay not only in trying to write a history of the working people but also considering their experience of ordinary life to which attention hadn’t been paid (Thompson, 1968). My primary aim is not examining ordinary life in Jewish communities as such, but I share this approach in the sense that I consider the Jewish past as part of Kobe’s history.

### What traces?

When I started to see the city in terms of traces, I saw not only the incompleteness of memory/history but also more space filled with traces which evoke the past. In the rest of this chapter, I focus on the material traces that I found in the city. I discuss more fully the immaterial traces in chapter 5. Through the attention to these Jewish material migratory traces, I will not only address the field of migration studies but also the topic of material culture. This converging area of material culture and migration studies is not a topic that has received much attention (Basu and Coleman, 2008), and even when it did, the material objects were seen as an aid to identity and memory.

Migration researcher Maja Povrzanovic-Frykman writes:

A common way of reasoning about migrants and objects is that objects signal a person's identity and aid memory. In contrast, I propose an interest in how objects constitute the world experienced by migrants in terms of its materiality. Here, objects do not only 'express', 'symbolize', 'reflect' or 'reify' social relations, they also make them. (Frykman, 2010)

Frykman offers an example of a family moving the same table as they move between countries. This table gives a sense of continuity for the family and 'constitutes' their world. Her view on the relationship between materiality and migrants offers a starting point from which to consider the relationship of materiality and migration apart from expressing identity.

I will describe some of the material traces I encountered to illustrate what I mean by material migrant traces. In this project, these traces primarily are architecture, artifacts, maps and photographs.

Photographic images are traces of time that has now passed. For example, I use the photograph of a synagogue in the section on the synagogue.



*Figure 4 Interior of Old Synagogue in Kobe, Photographer not known, Owned by Mr. David Moche*

This photograph is the image of the synagogue which does not exist now, and the Rabbi whom I interviewed had never seen this old synagogue. Therefore, the photo suggests the idea of a trace even more because the older synagogue did not exist during my fieldwork. I discuss fully the photographic trace later in the chapter.

The synagogue itself is treated as a trace. The synagogue portrayed in the film was built in 1970, and the father of Mr. David Moche played a leading role in refurbishing the synagogue at that time. The specific relationship between architecture and migration has been explored by the architect and theorist Stephen Cairns. He proposes a thought experiment on the pairing of architecture and migrancy to categorize some of the relationships which the two can have. He proposes architecture-by-migrants, architecture-for-migrants, and architects-as-migrants. In my study's context, the



Jewish synagogue in Kobe would be categorized primarily as architecture by migrants, implying a sense of migrant agency. Also, the synagogue would imply the pairing of architects-as-migrants as suggested by the story told in the film about how a Japanese architect went to Brooklyn to study synagogues when asked to redesign the Kobe synagogue (Cairins, 2003). I treat the synagogue as a trace because it evokes absent presences such as David Moche's father and all the actors involved in the establishment and sustenance of the building itself. Traces can exist inside the trace also. Inside the synagogue, there are tablets of the Old Testament; one of them has a crack although the other looks newer. The crack is the trace of the earthquake that happened in 1995, and the contrast between the two tablets accentuates its existence as the trace of the past.



*Figure 5 Synagogue in Kobe from outside, frame grab from footage*

In another section of the film, I focus on the cemetery. Gravestones can be seen as monuments to a memory of a person. But in the section of the film, we see Mr. Michael Fox, a current member of the community, interacting with gravestones with

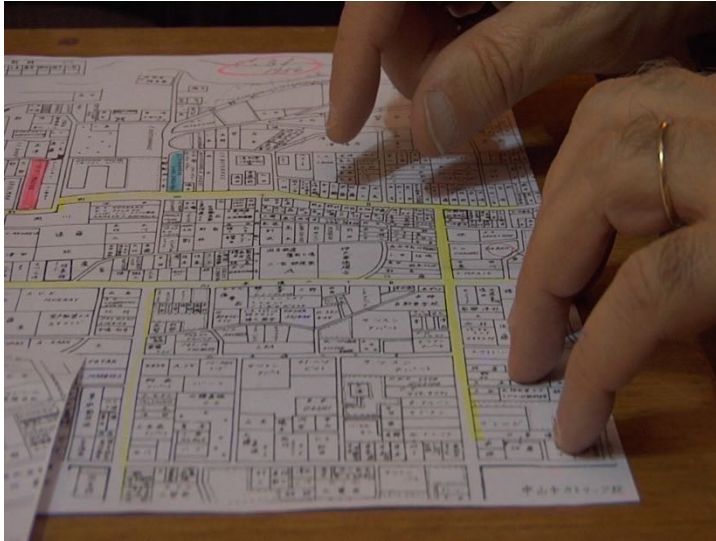
which he has no personal associations. He is not visiting the graves of a friend or a relative, though he has friends buried here. The gravestones serve as traces of Jewish people who passed through Kobe as well as a trace of someone who passed away. In this sense, the gravestone enacts the multiple meanings of the film title I explained in the introduction. The gravestone is a good example which illustrates the necessity of the concept of trace rather than memory or history. The trace (gravestone) does not illustrate an already fixed history (context); rather, the trace here suggests the existence of history and memory as a virtuality. Though Mr. Fox uses the word 'history' in the film, he is imagining 'history' through traces, and not the other way around, because for him, too, the history of the Jewish community is difficult to access.



*Figure 6 The Jewish Cemetery in Kobe, frame grab from footage*

Another trace I show in the film is the map. A scene occurs when Mr. Moche and the local researcher Mr. Iwata discuss where the Jewish migrants used to live in Kitanocho, Kobe. The maps are traces, and with the aid of Mr. Moche's memory, the two try to fill

in the gaps of memory/history. As I show in the scene, the map is not complete, and Mr. Moche's memory is not complete, either.



*Figure 7 Old map of Kobe, frame grab from footage*

The examples that I use suggest that there are roughly two types of material traces. These traces can be categorized as traces that move (portable) and traces that don't move. For example, the synagogue is a material trace that clearly doesn't move, but photos are traces that move (portable). This distinction will be important in the creation of the film and discussed in the later chapters.

I have described the actual traces that I encountered in the field. However, to fully understand these traces, I argue that the common temporal sense of a trace is not enough. If the traces were portable, what would happen to those traces that are now somewhere else? How do we treat them? Also, because we are dealing with migrant traces, the meaning of absence becomes double. Is the absence a more temporal one, or is the absence a more geographical one, in the sense that someone has just moved

somewhere else and the trace is left behind? To understand this complexity, we need to conceptualize the trace in detail.

### The trace

The concept of a trace suggests an absence that existed before. The trace is not the thing that existed but refers to a previous existence. The modern French philosopher Nancy beautifully describes the concept of a trace.

Of necessity, a trace is the trace of something [...]. As thing, the trace is a type of thing as any other (for example, it is the dried ink deposited by a pen or a printer). The trace as trace, however is something other than a thing. It is the presence of an absence indicated as such: as absence, and most often also as an absence which remains incompletely determined and still to be imagined or reconstituted. (Nancy, 2001, 110)

Nancy illustrates the idea with a track of a tire wheel. A tire track is different from the actual tire which left the trace. The track can point to the fact that a tire had passed, is now gone, and as such is a presence of absence. Also, by a tire track, we might imagine a car that passed, but actually we do not know for sure. Did someone just make a track with a tire? It is not 'defined completely.' The encounter with a trace also suggests that we encounter it in the present moment. Distance exists between what the trace evokes and our temporal position now. When we encounter the trace, we always lag behind the absent presence the trace evokes. The belatedness of the trace and the epistemic complexity it brings will be foregrounded again when I discuss the poetics of the film in the last chapter.

The absence, which a trace suggests, can be multiple things, but in the context of my research, agency is relevant. For example, as I have discussed, the synagogue would suggest the agency of someone who built it and sustained it. The Marxist cultural critic of the Frankfurt school, Walter Benjamin, discusses the concept of the trace throughout his work and is quite clear on the connection between a trace and an absent agency. He provides no systematic interrogation of the concept of trace, but it is something that comes up recurrently as Salzani points out (Salzani, 2007). For example, Benjamin talks about the bourgeois interior.

The interior is not just the universe but also the *étui* of the private individual. To dwell means to leave traces. In the interior, these are accentuated. Coverlets and antimacassars, case and containers are devised in abundance; in these, the traces of the most ordinary objects of use are imprinted. In just the same way, the traces of the inhabitants are imprinted in the interior. (Benjamin, 1999, 9)

In this example, the trace suggests the agency of the bourgeois who inhabits the room and who decorates the room. The suggested agency is not as strong as the agency of a political subject, though the point here is that traces are left behind even when the agency is a relatively passive one. Traces can still exist with a seemingly passive agency. The absent agency of the trace is accentuated when Benjamin frames traces in a more criminological sense. The urban space itself is seen as a site of traces, as a crime scene.

But isn't every square inch of our cities a crime scene? Every passer-by a culprit? Isn't the task of the photographer - descendant of the augurs and haruspices - to reveal guilt and to point out the guilty in his pictures? (Benjamin, 1931, 527)

Here, urban space itself is seen as a space where traces are left. The city space begins to show an invisible story which can be detected by the detective.<sup>3</sup> However, for my project, Benjamin's sense of the trace is too tied to the individual. This project is more about investigating a collective. To find a more collective sense of agency through the trace, I turn to the discipline of archaeology.

### Archaeology and the trace

The lack of memory and history suggests another discipline which works under a similar condition, in that, in most cases, the research would have no verbal memory or written history as its basis. Under such conditions, archaeology has largely focused on the material traces of the past and has tried to imagine the past life from it.

Archaeology is, 'the study of the human past through the material traces of it that have survived' (Bahn, 2012, 2). The lack of memory or history does not stop the archaeologists from imagining a past. In this sense, archaeologists have always dealt with absences and traces. We could say that traces and absences are almost their method.<sup>4</sup>

A theorist of archaeology, Shanks states:

For while dates of events are clearly important to archeological and historical accounts, the time of archaeology is distinctively concerned more with what remains, with what becomes of what was, with the way the past hangs on, lingers, is lost, or may be collected and cared for, left as legacy. (Shanks, 2009, 26)

For archaeology, the present where people encounter the traces is when its practice starts. Without the traces, the past that lingers, there would be no archaeology.

The discipline of archaeology has served as a metaphor for other disciplines and works.

One famous example would be Foucault's concept of archaeology (Foucault, 1989).

However, González-Ruibal states that though the discipline of archaeology has provided metaphors for other disciplines, essentially these works such as those by Foucault had very little to do with the craft of archaeology itself: 'In the hands of philosophers and sociologists, archaeological concepts are often cleansed and sanitized - detached from the direct engagement with things and the earth which characterizes archeology' (Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2013, 1). In other words, other works which use archaeology as a metaphor do not deal with the material traces that are the foundation of the craft of archaeology. In the case of my project, I actually deal with material traces of the past such as the synagogue, etc., so in this sense, my work is closer to the practice of archaeology compared to works that use archaeology as a metaphor.

The discipline suggests a study of a prehistoric past. However, it is not far-fetched that I draw on the ideas of trace from archaeology because it includes a sub-discipline called the archeology of modern life. This sub-discipline that emerged after the 1960s and 1970s uses archaeological methods to interpret modern life (Buchli and Lucas, 2001, Harrison and Schofield 2010). According to archaeologist Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, archaeology is particularly useful in attending to non-discursive levels of experience of modern life:

Though other disciplinary forays into the realm of twentieth-century material cultural studies generally tend to be at the discursive level, archaeology penetrates even more into the non-discursive levels of experience to address tensions, contradictions, exclusions, pains, etc. The traditional lack or limited extent of textual/discursive analysis within archaeology makes it well equipped to deal with non-discursive realms of experience and with particular poignancy when the subject is the contemporary past. (Buchli and Lucas, 2001, 14)

Although I do rely on some verbal memory in the film, my project focuses on traces instead of verbal memory or written history. Thus, using the insights of archaeology for my case is particularly relevant, making it possible to draw out meanings from traces.

### [The trace and fragmentariness](#)

The idea of traces also suggests fragmentariness, a lack of a sense of whole. Next, I would like to discuss what this fragmentariness implies. In the context of memory studies, Landsberg's book *Prosthetic Memory* addresses how issue of migration complicates the transmission of memory/history. Though not a book based on fieldwork, it arrives at a discovery similar to mine but through a consideration of the experiences of migration to the US (Landsberg, 2004). Landsberg argues that Hallbwachs' model of social memory does not fit when dealing with migration and memory. As I briefly touched upon, Hallbwachs is an influential theorist in the discussion of social memory, arguing that individual memory is essentially a collective one. Landsberg suggests that the model rests upon a stable society where the transmission is smooth.



Because Halbwachs emphasizes the collective frameworks by which a culture might share and order its recollections of the past, his account implies a geographically bounded community with a shared set of beliefs and a sense of natural connection among its members. (Landsberg, 2004, 12)

She argues that film can function, and has functioned, as a medium to transmit memories in spite of the lack of a geographically bounded community, hence the word prosthetic memory. She uses *Blade Runner* (Scott dir 1982) and *Total Recall* (Verhoven dir 1990) to analyze the story of memories and illustrate the concept of prosthetic memory. For both films, the boundary of a fake memory and an authentic memory is blurred. She sees in this blurred boundary the possibility of memory transmission in spite of the lack of authentic memory. In the context of migration, migration would imply the loss of authentic memory, but prosthetic memory can function as a substitute.

Landsberg's argument is true in that that migration can be detrimental to the transmission of memory/history, and I do not deny the possibility of cinema functioning as a memory for a community. However, I am skeptical of the condition of memory or history in the first place. Landsberg argues that migration complicates the transmission of memory. In her argument, what happens to all the gaps and fragmentariness? Is it possible to reconstruct 'memory' in such a situation? Or is it even ethical to reconstruct such a memory? <sup>5</sup> Her argument about the experience of slavery seems to demonstrate this lack of attention. She does discuss the experience of slavery, but she does not talk about the links that were severed because of the movement from the African continent to America. As I touched on before in chapter 2,

it is very difficult for an African American person to go back to Africa and find ancestral links. For example, in a lecture in London, the African American writer James Baldwin carefully presents this problem through a story about how he wasn't able to identify 'where he was from' if he were asked (Ove, 1969). What Landsberg's argument lacks is the discussion of gaps and the attitude towards them. Especially after my fieldwork, I became troubled with the idea of a 'whole'. After having seen the realities of the memory/history preservation in the Jewish community of Kobe, I saw an epistemological/ethical problem in attempting to construct a whole memory/history. Epistemologically, how is it possible, when the community themselves were struggling to collect the facts? Ethically, how am I to represent a whole story for them, or chronologically attempt to narrate their memory/history? It is a betrayal both to my experience in the field and their struggle. In this sense, though the concept of prosthetic memory is useful, I find Landsberg's approach not attentive enough to the methodological difficulties and ethical problems of retrieving memory.

Scrutinizing Landsberg's theory leaves us with the question of how we deal with fragmented traces of the past. Svetlana Boym, who was a scholar of comparative literature and also a photographer, picks up on this problematic and carefully distinguishes two types of nostalgia. She calls the first type of nostalgia 'restorative nostalgia', and the second one, 'reflective nostalgia'.

If restorative nostalgia ends up reconstructing emblems and rituals of home and homeland in an attempt to conquer and spatialize time, reflective nostalgia cherishes shattered fragments of memory and temporalizes space. Restorative nostalgia takes itself dead seriously. Reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, can be ironic and humorous. It reveals that longing and critical

thinking are not opposed to one another, as affective memories do not absolve one from, compassion judgment or critical reflection. This type of nostalgic is ironic, inconclusive and fragmentary. (Boym, 2001, 49-50)

Boym's conception is useful because it opens up a space where a longing for memory/history and the critical awareness of not restoring a whole can co-exist. Memories might be shattered, and the possibility of constructing a whole might not exist, but the concept of reflective nostalgia provides the possibility of embracing these shattered memories. In this sense, the choice of being attentive to the trace is not just about absences but also the attitude of treating such fragmentariness as it is. How I will execute a reflective nostalgia in filmic terms is another issue, and it will be discussed in chapter 6 where I will present a poetics of the film which deal with both the epistemic and ethical issues raised here.

The theme of traces and fragmentariness leads to another issue regarding traces. If traces are indeed fragmented and scattered, can the fragments be scattered geographically as well? I have already noted how some traces can move. So far, in terms of the distance the trace evokes, I have only discussed the temporal distance. Next, I would like to discuss the geographical distance that traces can evoke.

### [Geographical traces](#)

When we discuss migrant traces, the common idea of a trace which only has a temporal implication becomes insufficient because migration always involves

geographical movement. In this section, I will add a geographical dimension to the idea of a trace to develop the understanding of migrant traces.

Paul Carter, an art theorist and an architect, develops the idea of a trace but adds an element of movement which he calls the 'track'. In the context of architecture, the track is a concept which can disrupt the modern line which dominates modern architecture. The modern line refers to thought based on Cartesian thinking, and when it is drawn out, 'its discourse is designed to cancel out every trace of former occupation, every memory of movement at that place' (Carter, 2003, 88). Therefore, introducing the concept of a track deconstructs modern architecture in Carter's view. The concept of the track also suggests that a space is already inscribed by a subject that came from elsewhere.

Migrant mobility may be constitutional but it is not trackless. Neither defined by twinned destinations, nor deterritorialised, it involves processes of localization that also mobilize traces of that mobility. (Carter, 2003, 84)

The migrant leaves the track in a place, so the migrant's mobility involves a process of localization in a place. However, as a migrant trace, it is also characterized by a sense that it has come from elsewhere. In my project's context, Carter attempts to describe the two dimensions of the migrant trace by which both the temporal and spatial have to be accounted.

...the salient property of the trace is that it indicates a movement that can never be explained in terms of former presence. The trace has no origin because its materiality differentiates it from whatever made it. In this

sense it is a writing free from nostalgia but imbued with the past. It communicates mobility in a stable form. (Carter, 2003, 91)

'Mobility in a stable form' is a counterintuitive expression because 'mobility' and 'stable' suggest contrasting meanings. However, if we want to see the stability of the trace and the movement it evokes, we need to be able to embrace and consider both dimensions.

A good example of a geographical trace is the Jewish house that I encountered when Mr. Moche was walking the street. The house was a temporal trace in the sense that the owners used to live in Kobe a long time ago, but at the same time, it was a geographical trace because the owners were migrants from elsewhere and then moved again. In this sense, I argue that the house is a trace in both a temporal and geographical/spatial way. Paying attention to migration traces would mean paying attention to both the temporal and spatial dimensions of absence. This aspect suggests that the trace is not only something we encounter 'now', but also that the trace is something we encounter in a specific 'here'.

There is another aspect to the idea of a geographical trace. If traces were portable as I discussed before, then traces can move somewhere else. The photos in the last scene of the film provide an example. In this scene, Mr. Moche and his mother are looking at the photos that they took in Kobe, photos that are portable and material traces that have been moved to New York. In this sense, they are not only temporal but also geographical. This part of the film shows that the portability of the photos demonstrates the photograph as an object. Parkin argues that in terms of forced

displacement, 'private mementoes may take the place of interpersonal relations as a depository of sentiment and cultural knowledge' (Parkin, 1999, 303). In this project, the flight was not as drastic as what we would call a forced displacement. However, we can still perceive how these photos play an important role in the lives of Mr. Moche and his mother.



*Figure 8 Old photo album, frame grab from footage*

### [The visual trace](#)

Now, I would like to talk about the photographic trace in particular. In theorizations of photography, treating the photograph as a trace is a common approach. The paradigm of seeing photographic images as a trace is exemplified in the discussion of the index. The theorization comes from the mechanical nature of how a photograph is created.

The French film critic Andre Bazin, who had a large influence on the directors of the French New Wave, presented the idea of an ontology of the image as a mummy,

emphasizing the indexical nature of the photographic image (Bazin, 2005). But perhaps typical of this paradigm is French literary theorist Roland Barthes' interpretation.

Contrary to these imitations [painting and discourse], in Photography I can never deny that *the thing has been there*. There is a superimposition here: of reality and of the past. And since these constraints only exist for Photography, we must consider it, by reduction, as the very essence, the *noeme* of Photography. (Barthes, 2000, 76)

Though similar in their attention to indexicality, Barthes and Bazin differ in their relation to film. For Bazin, discussing the ontologies of the photographic image is continuous with discussing cinema. However, for Barthes, the photographic image is discontinuous with cinema.

... in the Photograph, something has posed in front of the tiny hole and has remained there forever (that is my feeling); but in cinema, something has passed in front of this same tiny hole: the pose is swept away and denied by the continuous series of images: it is a different phenomenology, and therefore a different art which begins here, though derived from the first one. (Barthes, 2000, 78)

Barthes argues that the pose, the 'term of an "intention" of reading' (Barthes, 2000, 78) cannot exist in the experience of watching cinema.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of these differences, they treat the trace as merely a temporal index in terms of indexicality. The photo is a trace of another time. But is it possible to treat a photo as a spatial index as well? Let's take a travel photograph, for example. We appreciate a travel photograph because it not only shows what has been but also where the photo

has been shot. And this is essentially true of every kind of photography. Every photograph was shot somewhere. Since, in photos, the time or place of recording is different from the time and place of seeing, a temporal and geographical distance is always created. Hence, the absence we encounter is not only a temporal absence but a geographical absence as well.

Shanks and Svavo develop a useful argument, stating that photography is not merely a temporal index but also a spatial arrangement. Describing the Camera Obscura, they state, 'the "camera" is a room or, more accurately, an architecture; photography is about architectural arrangements and relationships between viewer, room, window, viewed subject. The photographic image is a secondary product of such architecture' (Shanks and Svavo, 2013, 92). If we reflect on the practice of photography, indeed a large part of the practice consists of spatial arrangements: choosing a place to set the camera; choosing the angle, etc. Shanks and Svavo also emphasize photographer Henri Cartier Bresson's famous statement that the decisive moment is also a spatial arrangement:

The decisive moment is by no means simply a temporal instant grabbed by the photographer. It is an opportune moment where things come together in a certain arrangement or composition – the location, an event and the act of witnessing. This is another aspect of photography's architectural syntax. (Shanks & Svavo, 2013, 92)

A photograph wouldn't be possible without a specific spatial arrangement, and a photograph shows us this spatiality. These theorizations of photography make us realize the spatial dimension of the photographic index. In the study of the



migrational photographic trace, I use this idea of the spatial, architectural, photographic index as a guiding concept.

### Mobility and fixity

Here I would like to talk about the importance of the trace, especially in terms of the discussion on migration. When we talk of migration, there is the tendency to celebrate mobility and set it against a fixed place. In this last section of this chapter, I argue that migrant traces, as I have tried to conceptualize them in a dual sense, can deconstruct this dichotomy.

Tim Cresswell, a geographer who analyzes mobility, contrasts the nomadic metaphysics and the sedentarist metaphysics present in thought:

Within nomadic metaphysics, mobility is linked to a world of practice, of anti-essentialism, anti-foundationalism and resistance to established forms of ordering and discipline. Often mobility is said to be non-representational or even against representation. Linking all of these, perhaps is the idea that by focusing on mobility, flux, flow, and dynamism we can emphasize the importance of becoming at the expense of the already achieved - the stable and static. (Cresswell, 2006, 47)

Mobility then becomes not only about a geographical movement but also its meaning. Mobility becomes the opposite of fixity and the negation of a static identity. In this scheme, the phenomenon of migration is usually presented as an example of a nomadic metaphysics. Perhaps Iain Chambers is one theorist who took this nomadic metaphysics to the extreme:

Migrancy . . . involves a movement in which neither the points of departure nor those of arrival are immutable or certain. It calls for a dwelling in language, in histories, in identities that are constantly subject to mutation. Always in transit, the process of home-coming – completing the story, domesticating the detour – becomes an impossibility. (Chambers, 1993, 4)

Following Cresswell's description, Chambers claims that migrancy not only signifies migration but also achieves something more, a principle of living. Criticism from a more realistic point of view refutes this romanticization. Sara Ahmed, who is a theorist on gender and racial issues, notices this romanticism and rightfully criticizes it.

Chamber's narrative refuses to take migration literally. Instead migration becomes a metaphor for the very process of dislocation: this act of metaphorizing migration in some sense repeats the very process of migration which involves a dislocation from place. In this sense, to use migration as metaphor is to migrate from migration, such that it becomes an impossible metaphor that no longer refers to the dislocation from place but dislocation as such (thought already dislocates). In this sense the migrant becomes a figure... (Ahmed, 1999, 332-333)

Ahmed's point is valid in that it presents how metaphorization leads to the turning away from the realities of migration. However, such metaphorization had theoretical investments that had to do with the theoretical trend of that time. A scholar of postcolonial literary/cultural studies, Graham Huggan identifies and sums up what was at stake in the discussion of migration. He calls the nomadic metaphysics a 'traveling theory':

What is noticeable in much of this work, which might be loosely bracketed under the fashionable heading of 'traveling theory' is the metaphorisation of migration as a composite figure for a series of metaphysical as well as physical displacements. The metaphor of migration serves a variety of different purposes: to illustrate the increasing fragmentation of

subjecthood and subjectivity under (post)modernity; to reflect on the semantic instability underlying all constructions of (personal/cultural/national) identity; to insist on the homology between experiences of dislocation and the destabilisation of essentialist ideologies and fixed paradigms and patterns of thought. Migration has become a useful code-word for the different kinds of conceptual slippage that are characteristic of postmodern/post structuralist thought approaches toward linguistic and cultural systems... (Huggan, 2007, 131)

He eloquently points out that migration became a 'code word' in such theoretical trends. So, rather than merely a realistic reflection of the world, Chamber's ideas reflect the trend in thought at that time. Migration was seen as a theoretical 'site', rather than just a realistic phenomenon. Rather than pointing out the romanticism of these theories, I would like to raise a theoretical question instead. Can migration only be located in nomadic metaphysics? Can it only be seen as an example of dislocation? If we ask such questions, we begin to see that there are many debates and realities that contradict such a location. For example, the debates that surround migration both in academia and journalism, such as racism and citizenship, would not emerge as a problem unless the possibility existed that migrants were located in the place where they had moved. Therefore, seeing a migrant as a figure for mobility and dislocation is not helpful at all in the political situation in which they find themselves.

Also, traveling theories might celebrate anti-essentialism and the possibility of 'becoming', but many studies suggest that migrants struggle to keep their 'identities'. Much literature focuses on identity formation and migration, but one good example is Fortier's description of Italian migrants in London, where they are seen as a group performing their identities (Fortier, 2000). Also, Naficy identifies a group he calls 'post colonial ethnic and identity filmmakers', who emphasize their identity in the host

country among the Accented filmmakers (Naficy, 2001). Identity formation is a reality of migration, and in light of such realities, I argue that migration and migrants are not to be exclusively situated on the side of nomadic metaphysics.

So how do we see the relationship between migrants and places? Bender, a researcher on material culture and archaeology, points out, 'in reality, dislocation is always also relocation. People are always in some relationship to the landscape they move through – they are never nowhere' (Bender, 2001, 78). Bender's point is valid that in the phenomenon called migration, elements of fixity and location exist, a fact that the emphasis on mobility and flux tends to forget. It is quite understandable that, as an archaeologist, she came to such insight. As a logical consequence, Bender is also critical of the trend of travelling theory regarding migration. Bender proposes a phenomenological approach in seeing the relation between a migrant and a landscape. However, I find Bender's emphasis on phenomenology insufficient for my project. Of course, the focus on the phenomenological encounter will let us describe the interwoven nature of a migrant and a place. How would that then translate into a discussion of history and memory? Shouldn't we try to conceptualize a place where migration, memory and history come together? Shouldn't place already have a history of a migrant's presence? For this reason, it seems crucial to interrogate the relationship between memory/history, place, and migration.

[Where is memory?](#)

In the opening essay of the book *Memory and Migration*, Creet discusses the links between migration and memory, following the nomadic metaphysics that I have discussed. To argue her position, she positions Nora as a critical target. Nora argued that the real environment of memory (*milieu de mémoire*) was lost and that we only have sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*) now. These sites of memory are not literally geographical sites but may be a certain date that commemorates the nation.

According to Creet:

[Nora's] claim, however, that falsity-or artificiality attends to modern memory because of the loss of natural environments of memory is inadequate to the study of memory in a world of migration if the implication is that migrations of one kind or another can only produce history: once one leaves a territory of origin, memory is lost entirely. If we cede this Manichean divide between the fixity of history produced by distance and self-awareness and fluidity of memory tied to place and blissful ignorance, then we are completely constrained in our studies by the place of a notion of origin, and a continuing dichotomy between real and artificial memory, or memory and history in which place is by turns naturalized and imaginary. (Creet, 2011, 5)

Creet does two things here. First, she sees in the loss of memory's environment the sublimation of a place. Second, she argues that this distinction would lead to migration being cast away to history. Hence, for migration to have a connection with memory, it needs to be done without involving the idea of place.

However, is her treatment of Nora's theory accurate? When Nora discusses the contrast between memory and history, he also presents it as a condition of our times. The fall from real memory is a condition we share universally, so it applies equally to migration or non-migration. Also, Nora's discussion of *lieux* of memory does not mean

a literal 'place' in the first place. A date can be a site of memory in Nora's definition. I see in Creet's argument a hasty denial of the connection of place and migration, and Creet sees in Nora's theory the source of the denial. However, in Nora's discussion of lieux of memory, the concern seems to be a homogenous French culture. Tai has pointed out that Nora does not acknowledge the history of migration and colonialism at all in his work (Tai, 2001).

Thus, the point seems to be not setting movement against 'place' as Creet sees it, but of seeing the heterogeneity which might already exist in a place. So we can ask: can a *lieux de memoire* accommodate heterogeneity? I think one of Creet's approaches was wrong in that by trying to follow the binary of memory and history, she also jettisons the idea of trace and distance, as Nora did. In contrast to Creet, I would like to develop my idea of trace not only in a common sense but also as a migrant trace.

As I have discussed, a migrant trace evokes the presence of a migrant in the past. At the same time, a trace can evoke a sense of movement as conceptualized by Carter. Hayden, whom I discuss in depth in chapter 5, is a theorist who discusses traces in urban space. For Hayden, urban space is inscribed by such traces. Hayden's research is based on the premise that migrant traces are a part of urban memory. Researching a city's urban memory is the same as following a migrant track, and vice versa. From this perspective, there is no need to oppose movement to a place (in this case, the urban space) as Creet did. Urban space can and will inscribe migrant traces which people can read or track. When we see urban space in this way, it deconstructs the binary between place and movement. In reality, these two do not contradict each other; we

need not follow the sedentarist metaphysics or the nomadic metaphysics to understand this reality. What we need is to develop a view of place that lets us see the realities of migrant traces/tracks.

The reconceptualization of the urban space in respect to ideas of trace will be fully argued in chapter 5. But before moving on, I would like to discuss the issue of context in relation to decisions regarding the film in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4: What is this situation? The issue of context

In general, migration and the idea of context are inseparable. For example, the anthropologist James Clifford develops the idea of a museum being a contact zone where different cultural contexts intersect. He extends this idea of a contact zone to a state, region, and a city (Clifford, 204). If migration implies that a person moves from one context to another context, we can assume that the person carries a context from place to place. However, the adopted context would differ from the context left behind when the person moves. In this sense, when we talk of migration, we cannot avoid the intersecting of different contexts. In my project, also, multiple contexts were implied, but two points which affected the film were unique to this case. In this chapter, I will discuss the issues of context surrounding my project. This discussion of context leads to the creative decisions concerning the film.

### [The Jewish context: Why I chose to focus on the Jewish community of Kobe](#)

In this project, I started out by trying to find the memory of the Jewish refugees as I described in chapter 2. However, I discovered that the community did not know much about their history in Kobe, let alone have any memory of the refugees arriving. At this point, I was confronted with a choice. Even if I chose to focus my attention on lost traces as a project, the choice remained about whether to choose the Jewish refugees as the film's focus or to make the community the focus. For these reasons, I thought placing the focus on the community itself rather than the refugees would be better.



Firstly, I thought that if I focused on the story of the refugees, the historical context of which is heavily fixed, I would invalidate the past of the community which was beginning to emerge through the fieldwork. Even the Holocaust is now considered a cosmopolitan memory<sup>1</sup> (Levy and Snaizer, 2006) and its remembrance accused of being an industry. Of course, I am aware of issues surrounding the representation of the Holocaust itself.<sup>2</sup> I believed that this context would undermine the specifics of the story of the little community with its already established value. As I pointed out, a documentary film, *Visas and Virtues* (1997), which focuses on the heroic act of Chiune Sugihara and the story of the 1941 refugees already exists. Also, a journalistic book *Visas of Life and the Epic Journey* (2014) by Akira Kitade focuses on Japanese people other than Sugihara who helped the Jewish refugees. However, both in the film and in the book, the city of Kobe is treated as merely a destination for the refugees, and the local Jewish community is out of sight. This follows from the book *Jewish Topographies* which defines the obscuring of community as a symptom related to Jewish space in history. The book points out that the emphasis on the Holocaust has made it difficult to see regular living Jewish spaces (Brauch, Lipphardt, and Nocke, 2008). Indeed, choosing to focus solely on the Jewish refugee story and undermining the community would be reproducing the discourse that this book finds problematic. Following this point, I chose not to focus on the issues of the Holocaust in the project but to see the more ordinary living Jewish spaces which, in this case, would be the city of Kobe.

The second point I want to make concerns the issue of the Eurocentrism. I discovered also that many Jewish families residing in Kobe came from The Middle East. For

example, David Moche's father came from Iraq. He might be called an Arab Jew, or a Sephardic/Mizrahi Jew. As cultural studies researcher Ella Habiba Shohat argues, the notion of an Arab Jew as a historic reality escapes the Eurocentric opposition of Arab and Jew (Shohat, n.d.). In the film *Homage by Assanination* (1992) by Palestinian film director Elias Sleiman, there is a scene in which a voice on the phone talks about how in the discourses surrounding the Gulf War, the story of the Jews from The Middle East is missing. This voice is narrated by Ella Habiba Shohat. I imagine by making a film about the Gulf-war, the director discovered another story which is forgotten under Eurocentric assumptions.<sup>3</sup> In light of these issues, solely focusing on the story of the Jewish refugees from Europe will undermine a part of the history of the Arab Jews and risks reproducing Eurocentrism. Also, Jewish culture researchers Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin argue that diasporic identity is a disaggregated identity which should allow the idea of an Arab Jew (Boyarin and Boyarin, 1993). However, this claim doesn't mean that I can ignore the Jewish refugee story altogether. The event happened in the past in Kobe. How would I describe this past? I will discuss this fully in chapter 6.

### [The circularity of context](#)

Choosing the Jewish community in Kobe as the focus also leads to further questions about the idea of context. Because not much written is about the Jewish community and because I could not find much about its history or memory, trying to contextualize the community was difficult. I have already presented the history of Kobe and its migrational past, so the context in that sense is apparent. But placing what I found in the historical context of the community itself involves a certain kind of circularity,

meaning that the context would be generated from what I found myself.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, it is not accurate to imagine a fixed historical context where I can contextualize my project or the film. If the sense of context implied having pre-knowledge, it was difficult to position what I found in relation to an 'already-known' context. This circularity of context regarding the community is what constitutes the migratory condition. The problematic of trace is a way to deal with this circularity because the idea of a trace doesn't initially require a preconceived context. A trace is more of a signifier of an existing context which is still not yet known. As I have noted, archaeology provides a good way to understand this relationship between trace and context. In the practice of archaeology, the trace left behind is the starting point of imagining the past, and not the other way around. The trace provides direction to where the context might be.

Facing this issue of context, I also considered placing David Moche as the protagonist of the film. Placing him as the center of the film would give a tentative perspective to its multiple contexts. Also, he is only the only person apart from myself who moves between New York and Kobe, negotiating between different places. However, for this film, I chose instead to highlight the difference of multiple contexts rather than provide a perspective with which a viewer can identify.

In the next chapter, following the discussion in chapter 3, I focus on the urban space where we encounter the trace. Also, I discuss methodological and epistemological problems in finding and representing the trace in the city.

## Chapter 5: Migration, Urban Space and Invisibility

I have argued that the notion of migrant traces can offer a solution to the binary scheme of fixity and movement in the third chapter. In my project, the urban space especially allows some fluidity which I would like to explore in terms of migrant traces. But before discussing the relation between urban space and migrant traces, I would like to see how migration and urban space have been associated.

### Migration, diversity and urban space

The relation between urban space and migration is a topic that has received considerable attention. Particularly in the American context, we can go back to the Chicago School of Sociology to see this. For example, *Street Corner Society* (1993), written by William Foot Whyte and published in 1943, is an ethnographic study of an Italian neighborhood in New York in the 1930s. It is regarded as one of the classic studies of the Chicago School. It is not surprising that the earlier urban research occurred in the U.S., also a country formed by immigration. With the onset of globalization, the issue of migration and urban space seemed to have again received attention. For example, the issue of migration constitutes a big part of sociologist Saskia Sassen's *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (2001). Here, the city is treated not only as something which is inside the national economy but also as a distinctive space functioning simultaneously outside of it. Migrants are figures who inhabit this space, in and outside the national economy.

Even in the context of migration studies, the city has been seen as a privileged site of research. Transnationalism has provided a framework by which to analyze the multiple relations the migrant develops between the country of origin and country of settlement (Schiller, N.G. et al., 1992). Michael Peter Smith, one of the proponents of transnationalism, argues that the study of transnationalism should be grounded in the urban (Smith, 2001).

The common thread, and one of the main topics of inquiry among the literature of migration and urban space, is that it is seen as a space for diversity or of multi-cultures. Susan S. Fainstein, a theorist on urban space, states that the diversity has become the new guiding principle of city planning (Fainstein, 2005). Diversity could mean many things, not just about multi-cultures, but, for my discussion, I focused only on the multi-culture aspect. Landry and Wood's idea of an intercultural city (2008) is a good example of setting diversity as a principle of city planning. They propose that considering the city's diversity is its advantage, with the conviction that, 'there are enormous untapped resources, which our societies can scarcely afford to forgo, available from the creative power of heterogeneity and dissonance...' (Landry and Wood, 2008, 11). The political philosopher Iris Marion Young sees the diversity of the city as an opportunity for the promotion of social justice. The ideal of city life is a vision of social life affirming group difference. 'As a normative ideal, city life instantiates social relations of difference without exclusion. Different groups dwell in the city alongside one another, of necessity interacting in city spaces' (Young, 1990, 227).

However, we can ask whether a space of diversity automatically produces diverse cross-cultural interactions. One of the founding theorists of transnationalism, Nina Glick Schiller, even goes so far as to say that seeing urban space as a space for encounters among strangers only maintains the binary exclusionary practice that discriminates between migrants and non-migrants.

Yet, if our goal is to understand how people - migrant and non-migrant in background - live their lives in cities and forge domains of commonality as well as difference, such taken-for-granted binaries of difference are inadequate. The categorization of persons of migrant background as perpetual strangers - especially if they claim diasporic identities - leaves no conceptual space to note the significance of the bonds of sociability that I have seen connect migrants and non-migrants in cities in Germany, England, and the United States in which I have lived and conducted research. (Glick Schiller, 2015, 105)

Is the urban space not a site for multi-culture and diversity as theorists claim it to be? I think we are missing an element in these discussions. One of the limits of these discussions on urban space and diversity seems to be that its perspective is fixed on the present condition of urban space. However, if we are talking about inclusion in urban space, shouldn't we attempt to understand the historicity of urban space too? The book *History, Memory and Migration* points out that migration and memory studies have not been studied together and that memory has not been considered an important element in incorporation.

Studies on the incorporation of immigrants up until now, especially in Europe, have tended to focus on political participation, which has led to the overemphasis on the legal and political requirements relating to citizenship. As a consequence, there has been little work to assess the fundamental issues of belonging, such as how migrants identify with a society which has markedly different memories and histories than their own. (Glynn and Kleist, 2012, 5)

Though they do not specifically talk about urban space, I agree that the attention to memory and history should be made part of the discussion of belonging. I argue that my attention to migrant traces adds these dimensions (also geographical traces) to the discussions of diversity in urban space. In a most obvious sense, if there were migrants present in the past, wouldn't the urban space be already shaped by them? Thus, rather than being only a demographic factor contributing to a demographic diversity in the present, a migrant also can be seen as an agent in shaping the urban space in which other residents live. For example, if we think about the synagogue in Kobe, rather than merely a factor in the urban space, the Jewish community has already been an agent shaping the urban space of Kobe because the synagogue is part of urban space in a material sense.

#### [Hayden and urban space](#)

So how can we see the city in terms of migrational traces? Hayden's work builds a useful framework for seeing the city as a space for migrational traces. Hayden's book *The Power of Place* is a book that deals with migration, urban space and memory/history. In this sense, she captures all the elements that I discussed so far, which makes her work unique and particularly useful in informing my research. First, I would like to describe the strength of Hayden's approach and then its limits.

How does she arrive at the idea of traces? Hayden is not just attentive to migrants; she wants to rediscover the 'invisible' histories of ethnic communities, women, and workers in a city. She states:

The power of place - the power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory - remains untapped for most working people's neighborhoods in most American cities, and for most ethnic history and most women's history. (Hayden, 1997, 9)

She recognizes the urban landscape as being a source for memory/history for the community under discussion, which would include migrants. This practice of recognizing the historical presence of a group in an urban space is essentially a political act. When she uses the term 'invisibility,' the word implies a social invisibility that reflects the marginalised position of those groups in the present. This idea is also an attempt to rewrite the history of a city in such a way as to recognize its historical diversity. It could be said that this practice of recognizing the diversity of the city's history is a politics of recognition executed within temporal conditions.<sup>1</sup> Hayden writes about the city of LA:

Until Los Angeles citizens are able to forge a coherent account of their own past and their historic landscape it will be difficult to orient either long term residents or new immigrants to the place. (Hayden, 1997, 83)

We could see here that, for Hayden, recognizing these alternative histories of the past is directly linked to the possibility of creating a new space in the present and even the future. This link is what separates Hayden's arguments from the arguments of urban space and diversity. Hayden does not just argue for diverse urban space. She says that



we should rediscover the urban space which is already inscribed with traces that point to its diversity.

One thing of note is that Hayden's concern is with the diversity of the American city. Rediscovering the urban landscape is the recognition and representation of 'American' diversity. It is also about giving the people a sense of belonging to the American city:

Can Americans learn how to respect and nurture a diverse urban public? In every city and town across the United States there are resources waiting to be tapped. Based on the available resources, Americans can have urban historic public places with resonances for large number of people who are not now represented. (Hayden, 1997, 246)

As she writes in the epilogue, it is no wonder that the discovery of this history seemed so urgent after the LA riots in 1992. She asks, 'Is it inevitable for Los Angeles to be torn by conflicts of race, ethnicity, gender and class?' (Hayden, 1997, 244). However, that her interest and research sites are primarily American does not mean that her approach is irrelevant for other contexts and other cities. Indeed, I see Hayden's work as laying out a template for projects to make visible the migrant histories and memories in the city. Her work can be especially useful for a country like Japan which, generally speaking, is not considered to have rich migrant histories and memories. One of the political aims of my project is to show through the city of Kobe that there are such migrant histories and memories in Japan.

The strength of Hayden's approach lies in reminding us that the present narrative/image of a city is always a contested one, not fixed or considered as fixed. If the narrative, or

the memory/history of a city, is a solid and fixed one, there would be no possibility of challenging it, and there would be no point in trying to rediscover these alternate and invisible histories. Therefore, there would be no place for the history of `invisible` groups in the future. Her practice challenges the fixed narrative of a city seemingly dominated by white male actors. However, her discussion is not without its limitations. I will point out a few weaknesses in her work. I find three major limitations, and I now discuss in detail what those limitations are.

### Material traces and immaterial traces

When Hayden proposes to rediscover the invisible history/memory of the city, the only obstacles to this recovery seem to be 'political', as it were. But once we try to rediscover any kind of history/memory in the city, aren't we faced with more foundational problems? To illustrate the difficulty, I will introduce the theory of memory advanced by Andreas Huyssen, who is a researcher of German literature and culture. Compared to Hayden, Huyssen finds memory a more elusive and difficult thing to approach. He writes:

The fissure that opens up between experiencing an event and remembering it in representation is unavoidable. Rather than lamenting or ignoring it, this split should be understood as a powerful stimulant for cultural and artistic creativity. [...] The mode of memory is *recherche* rather than recuperation. The temporal status of any act of memory is always the present and not, as some naïve epistemology might have it, the past itself, even though all memory in some ineradicable sense is dependent on some past event or experience. It is the tenuous fissure between past and present that constitutes memory, making it powerfully alive and distinct from the archive or any other mere system of storage and retrieval. (Huyssen, 1995, 3)

As this statement makes evident, memory is not something waiting to be retrieved, and memory is situated in a rupture between past and present. The rupture itself is the condition of memory and the search for memory. We can see here a less optimistic attitude in approaching memory compared to Hayden's.

Huyssen's idea of a palimpsest exemplifies the gap and the difficulty of retrieval. The idea of a city being a palimpsest has been discussed before by people such as Freud, when he saw in Rome a metaphor of the psyche. In Rome, layers of the past coexist to some extent, and he saw that as a metaphor for the mind (Freud, 1930). A similar view was proposed by the architectural theorist Aldo Rossi.

The study of history seems to offer the best verification of certain hypotheses about the city, for the city is in itself a repository of history.... the city was seen as a material artifact, a man made object built over time and retaining traces of time, even if in a discontinuous way. (Rossi, 1984, 128)

Huyssen is a follower of this idea of the city consisting of layers. The example of an urban palimpsest for Huyssen is Berlin, where history is a history of ruptures. From the rise of fascism, the defeat of the Second World War, the city being divided during the cold war, and to the unification of Germany, the city almost seems to represent the 20<sup>th</sup> century itself with all of its ruptures. Thus, it is not difficult to see a correspondence between Huyssen's emphasis about memory in general and Berlin's memory/history. We cannot assume a smooth linear path to the memories of Berlin given the many discontinuities the city has gone through. We can see that when Huyssen talks about 'invisible' histories of Berlin, he means not only 'social invisibility' but also the absences, such as the

disappearance and destruction of buildings and architecture, which are not visible right now.

Berlin as text remains first and foremost historical text, marked as much, if not more, by absences as by the visible presence of its past, from prominent ruins such as the Gedächtniskirche at the end of the famous Kurfürstendamm to World War II bullet and shrapnel marks on many of its buildings. (Huyssen, 2003, 52)

I would like to call this absence an 'ontological' invisibility to differentiate it from a 'social' invisibility. This concept of invisibility suggests a difficulty in retrieving the memory, and it should not be confused with the social invisibility related to the politics of recognition, which is the focus of Hayden's work. I use the word ontological because the invisibility depends on whether the traces still exist or not. If these traces don't exist anymore, we cannot grasp them with our perception. In fact, arguably in Hayden's case, too, she is bound to encounter the ontological invisibility that I have described. It is impossible for anyone to avoid such a difficulty when trying to retrieve traces from the past. However, she does not elaborate on this kind of difficulty. Also, the important thing to note here is that this invisibility differs from the absence which the material trace evokes. Now, we are talking about the traces that have been gone, which should be separated from material traces that we can encounter.

The concept of palimpsests well describes a site of memory where multiple layers suggest no transparent links to these memories from the present and where invisible and immaterial traces exist on top of material traces.

Berlin as palimpsest implies voids, illegibilities and erasures, but it also offers a richness of traces and memories, restorations and new constructions that will mark the city as lived space. (Huyssen, 2003, 84)

To better illustrate the point Huyssen makes, I would like to compare this view with the architectural historian Mark Crinson's definition of urban memory. For Crinson,

Urban memory can be anthropomorphism (the city having a memory) but more commonly it indicates the city as a physical landscape and a collection of objects and practices that enable recollections of the past and that embody the past through traces of the sequential building and rebuilding. (Crinson, 2005, 12)

In this definition, the material landscape is equated with the urban memory itself. Thus, the existence of a memory/history which might not be recollected from the material landscape is erased from our awareness.

In conclusion, the material trace can be useful, but there is a limit to its reach. The contrast of Hayden's and Huyssen's approach highlights a problem which is present in any kind of attempt to retrieve memory in urban space. We would always encounter a gap in retrieving its memory. If we were to stay true to the fact that the search for memory always starts from the present, dealing with social invisibilities is not enough; we also need to deal with the ontological invisibilities of urban space.

#### [Geographical traces in the city](#)

Another problem in Hayden's work is that though it does deal with migrant traces, not much attention is paid to the geographical dimension, in other words, migrant traces

that suggest a place from elsewhere. In the context of my research, some of the memories of Kobe were not to be found in Kobe itself. For instance, as I have pointed out, most of the traces of the Jewish refugee experience could only be found in the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. The traces were transported to another area. Also, when I went to New York to see Mr. David Moche, I had the opportunity to see his photos of Kobe. When I saw the photos of Kobe in New York, I saw traces not only in a temporal sense but also in the geographical sense. Those two levels coexisted in these photographs. They are photographs about the Jewish community of Kobe but were seen in a different place.

This experience could suggest another type of invisibility that I encountered during the project. In the sense that these traces are absent from Kobe and that being located in Kobe would not allow me to access these traces, they are invisible. I would like to conceptualize this invisibility by using Boyer's idea of fragments.

Boyer is another example of a theorist who treats the city as composed of layers of multiple temporalities. However, she is not optimistic about the effects of these layers. Her worry is that the different layers in themselves offer no real solution to the crisis of memory and public culture in our modern city.

In the City of Collective Memory, we find that different layers of historical time superimposed on each other no longer generate a structural form to the city but merely culminate in an experience of diversity... (Boyer, 1994, 19)

And then later in the same book, Boyer also points out:

So today we might say that the pervasive appearance of historic districts in our western cities, the nostalgically designed theme parks and historically coded styles of life, have tilted the scale toward a contemporary form of memory crisis. Ripping fragments of buildings or artifacts from their original contexts and then collecting and preserving them in 19<sup>th</sup> century museums is not that distinct an act from attempts to transform our present-day cities into outdoor museums whose architectural streetscapes and spatial stratas become privileged landscapes to explore in pleasure or dismay. (Boyer, 1994, 131)

She calls these layers from the past ‘fragments’. For Boyer, the concept of fragments is both a source of negativity and positivity. The fragments are sources of negativity in the sense that they offer an opportunity to indulge in the memory crisis in our time, seen in the attitudes of those whom she calls ‘post modernists.’

As ‘reality’ of experience can never be grasped nor truthfully depicted, postmodernists hope to avoid inevitable errors by maintaining an open position. Yet the discontinuities and ruptures, difference and otherness they uncritically celebrate impose severe consequences on the public realm of the city. (Boyer, 1994, 480)

However, the fragments convey a positive sense also. Following Walter Benjamin, Boyer also states that fragments can have disruptive powers. ‘Can we, like Walter Benjamin before us, recall, reexamine, and re-contextualize memory images from the past until they awaken within us a new path to the future?’ (Boyer, 1994, 29).

The concept of fragments is useful in that it provides a sense of the original context from which those fragments came as well as the current context in which the fragments are

placed. The concept suggests a sense of movement from one layer to another. However, in Boyer's case, a fragment is considered only from one layer of time to another layer of time. This definition seems like only half of the story. Aren't there fragments from another place too? And also, don't most fragments embody both a temporal movement and geographical movement at the same time, as I theorized in the third chapter?

Boyer discusses how museums were places to display artifacts from another time, but we know that those artifacts could be from another place as well, and that museums in general also served as displays of exotic artifacts from a distant area. Anthropologist James Clifford is well aware of the geographical movement and politics involved in exhibiting artifacts in museums, and he proposes to see the space as contact zones:

In contact zones, cultural appropriations are always political and contestable, cross-cut by other appropriations, actual or potential. Museums and the market manage the travel of art objects between different places. (Clifford, 1997, 211)

Clifford does not see the museum as a neutral space but as a space implicated by movement and politics. In Boyer's work, we do not find this geographical perspective. In effect, the fragments are only seen in a temporal perspective, whereby the only way to get out of the system seems like a temporal loop between the past and present.

Hayden's theory suffers the same limitations. Hayden, though she discusses migrant traces in the city, never discusses how such traces can be from somewhere else. This omission could be said to come from her focus on the aspect of inclusion in the American city. In other words, if a geographical aspect of the trace shows a movement aspect, it



could be counterproductive to emphasize the inclusionary aspect of the city. However, as I have argued, if the geographical aspect of the trace is missing, then the trace is telling only half the story.

### Traces, layers and gaps

The third issue I have with Hayden's argument is the issue of representation. I have included the issue of layers in this chapter. But how does the trace which I have discussed in chapter 1 relate to the concept of layers? The answer lies in the question itself. How do we perceive layers in the first place? The idea of layers, though it is real in the abstract sense, is not something we can perceive directly. Unless there is something left (traces), we are not able to conceive of the existence of layers in the first place. In this sense, logically, traces precede the idea of layers. I believe that theorists of urban memory whom I discussed earlier fail to clarify this conceptual relationship between traces and layers.

To discuss the problem in detail, I would like to analyze the Tenement Museum in New York as an example of representing migrant traces in the city. Integrating migration history in museums seems to be an international trend in the museum scene.<sup>2</sup> However, this museum is unique because the actual buildings where migrants once lived are now themselves the museum. In this sense, the setting is quite similar to Kobe where old buildings of migrants are shown as heritage (as I show in the very first section of the film). The museum tries to tell the stories of an apartment on 97 Orchard Street built on Manhattan's Lower East Side in 1863 which was home to almost 7000 working class

immigrants. It is an interesting case regarding how to represent an immigrant past of the city through its material traces (Tenement Museum, New York City, n.d.). Though it is called a museum, no neutral museum space exists, in the common sense of display space, to exhibit this history. The actual apartment and rooms themselves which were inhabited by migrants are used as an exhibition space. We are able to tour these old apartments set up to recreate the way the inhabitants lived at the time so that we can get a sense of what their life was like. Guides also give visitors explanations and details of former inhabitants' lives. The whole tour is designed to make the viewers feel as if they are experiencing the room the way the migrants experienced the room. These kinds of museum formats are called living history museums, or living museums. A researcher on museum space, Alvetina Naumova, makes a distinction between traditional museums and living history museums and describes the positive qualities the latter has.

A living museum necessitates activation of all senses, a state of alertness to the uncontrollable world around us. While in a traditional historic museum one may close his/her eyes to block him/herself from the world, in a living museum, the smells, the movements of air, the creaking of the centuries-old floorboards under one's feet, conversations of the visitors, and the working of a frequently present printing press will prevail despite the shut eyelids. (Naumova, 2015, 2)

A living space offers a more engaging multi-sensorial experience compared to traditional museums, which seems true if we reflect on our experience. I visited the museum in 2012 in the hope of getting some ideas for my film. The installations were recreated beautifully, and I sensed enthusiasm from the guides who tell the story of the immigrant experience; these elements did give me this sensorial experience. However, I felt that the elements could have negative effects too. Because of its focus on recreating the past,

this tactic erases the sense of distantness between our present moment and the past. It erases the distance by giving the impression that the past is 'here'. Anthropologist Richard Handler and philosophy researcher William Saxton see in living history museums the search for 'authenticity' and question its temporal pretense: '...authentic history will replicate rather than interpret the past: any gap between past and present is to be closed, yielding a restoration or re-creation isomorphic with the original' (Handler and Saxton, 1988, 243). In the context of my argument, it erases what a 'trace' is.

So how do we keep the distance, the gap, as it were? Boym describes the way the Jewish synagogue in Berlin was reconstructed, respecting the gaps and traces.

Modern elements indicate those parts of the interior that were beyond recovery; they do not try to mask them or cover them up with a simulated patina of time. No artistic wholeness can be achieved here... (Boym, 2001, 202-203)

Boym describes the way the synagogue was reconstructed, and of course, the Tenement museum is not trying to reconstruct the building. However, what I want to highlight here is the logic behind each 'reconstruction.' The museum logic rests on the idea of reconstructing the whole of the past, and the synagogue abandons that logic for the respect of its history. It is said that there were multiple layers of wallpaper in the apartment and that people could uncover the newer layers to find old layers of wallpaper. The old wallpaper would signify the presence of old families living in the place. Yet, at the same time, we cannot see the old wallpaper unless we start peeling the new wallpaper. I argue that this kind of discovery of past traces, and also representation, is

more true to the idea of a trace and gaps. The layers of wallpapers are literally palimpsests as Huyssen describes, where past layers are non-transparent, and there is no direct route to the hidden layers. The sense of distance between past and present is never lost in the multiple layers of wallpaper. Also, at the same time, the traces of the past are what allow us to imagine layers in the first place.

With this perspective of representing the city rather than reading the city, we can look back on Huyssen's way of treating the past in his work and see that his approach must rely on photographic traces to see and discuss these layers. As I have discussed above, compared to Hayden, Huyssen recognizes the gap that exists between the present and the past. In other words, Huyssen is also very conscious that the work of memory always starts from the present. However, when he talks about the invisibility of the past, how can he tell if something is absent in the present? Huyssen can only say that a building has been absent if he already knew a building had stood there. If we think about the process of remembering, we can only remember again something that was known before. When he uses the word 'absence,' he is already comparing the present with the previous knowledge of the past. When Huyssen talks about absences, the absences do not come purely from the search for the present, as he says, but through the process of a hidden juxtaposition. By juxtaposition, I mean comparing the present condition of a city with the knowledge of the past condition of a city. In his essay, 'The voids of Berlin' (Huyssen, 2003), we see that he uses many photos of Berlin to show what Berlin was like in the past. The photos here support the act of comparing the past and present. In effect, Huyssen recognizes the 'absences' retrospectively, through the photographs.

This recognition could be seen in another light. Some might argue that the photos are inserted into the present, so the search for memory actually starts from the present, as Huyssen argues. However, we should not forget how and 'when' these photos were taken. These photos were taken at a certain moment in time in the past, but we see the photos in the present. If photos are traces, as we discussed, that embody the time when they were shot, then when Huyssen presents us with photos taken in the past as a memory, he introduces different temporalities and not just his present consciousness. To talk about the invisible past, Huyssen must import a perspective of the past into the present.

This kind of circularity can be said to come from Huyssen's attitude towards the retrieval of memory. He is aware that retrieval is not a straightforward process, but in essence, the retrieval of memory and the representation of memory have not been differentiated. He states that the trope of the palimpsest 'does not mean to deny the essential materiality of extant buildings', and that reading memory traces does not change objects 'into another form of writing' (Huyssen, 2003, 7). However, the limit of his approach seems to be that he stops his discussion at the level of 'reading'. How is he going to 'write' what he 'reads'? This dimension is left out of the discussion, which demonstrates the identification of retrieval and representation.

In Hayden's case, it is more obvious: 'The urban landscape is not a text to be read, but a repository of environmental memory far richer than any verbal codes' (Hayden, 1997, 227). However, the treatment of old photos and old maps undergoes a similar process. As I have written, Hayden's sense of invisibility is more a matter of social invisibility. But

how does she get a visible image of the past? It is through old maps and old photographs, which are traces as I have discussed. These fragmented traces of the city are what partly constitute the memory of the city, and yet, she seems not to be shocked by the invisibility of the city's past without these fragments. In her example of Little Tokyo, Hayden presents several photos from the past which are treated as evidence of the Japanese American community in L.A. The photos are no doubt evidence of the community's existence, but her treatment of them suggests no consideration of the distance between the present and the past, and the multiple traces are just jumbled up together. Also, Hayden offers no sense of how one trace of the city might have rendered another trace invisible. It is as if the traces are just laid out on a flat table. In both Hayden and Huyssen's case, the common problematic seems to be that they in effect erase the distance between past and present. This erasure comes from failing to consider the different processes involved in retrieving memories and representing them.

In terms of geographical invisibility, the problem is quite similar. In the Jewish case that I have discussed, some people from the community thought that the memories of the Jewish community were lost and weren't recoverable. However, if we take into account the geographical invisibility, there is actually a memory of the past to retrieve. The retrieval cannot be done just by going through a single space, which is the city of Kobe. The displaced memories could only be found elsewhere. In my case, I found the memories in New York and Washington, D.C. In this case, again the question of distance arises. I could use the photos and memories that I found in New York and Washington seamlessly with what I found in Kobe. However, that would betray the geographical invisibility that I encountered while I was searching for the trace as well as the

geographical distance that lies between these traces. So the question here is like the one that pertains to the temporal invisibility. How do I treat these traces and gaps without erasing a sense of geographical invisibility?

In the next chapter, I deal with the issue of representing these temporal and geographical gaps in a filmic space. How do we give a sense of these gaps through film? Is film even an appropriate medium for this representation? I will develop what I call a poetics of delay which can respond to these gaps in a filmic manner.

## Chapter 6: Migration, Gaps and the Poetics of Delay

Through the past chapters, I analyzed the migratory condition of study and identified a distance, a gap, as an essential feature of it. The film about this migratory condition should address this gap. But what does this gap mean in terms of film? How do we get a sense of this gap through film? I look at documentary theory, visual anthropology, and past films to address these questions. In terms of films, I discuss past films about migration as well, but my main point is to discover a creative strategy to communicate this gap. Moreover, my aim in this chapter is not to talk about migration and film in general.

### [Visual Anthropology and migration](#)

To start explaining the film's creative strategy, I would like to draw on anthropology and visual anthropology, where the question of how to represent migrational processes has been discussed directly. Because their discussion is a generative one, problematising what forms films should take, I find it a useful starting point to talk about the productive forms for a film on migration. In anthropology and visual anthropology, montage has been proposed as a way to represent migrational processes.

The anthropologist George E. Marcus tried to look back on how montage made an impact on modernist literature and find a model for breaking with the realist conventions of ethnographic writing that was a target of criticism for anthropology at that time. He presents the topic's different categories to which the introduction of



montage could contribute, and he focuses on the geographical aspect in his article.<sup>1</sup> He wanted to introduce montage because he was dealing with the global processes of migration, and to approach the subject with montage seemed like an effective way. In his own words,

Initially in studying the Tongan diaspora during the 1970s then in studying contemporary dynastic family fortunes in the United States and now in pursuing the related topic of the emergence of great public cultural institutions in the West, I came to focus upon the increasingly deterritorialized nature of cultural process and the implications of this for the practice of ethnography. If ethnographic descriptions can no longer be circumscribed by the situated locale or community the place where cultural process manifests itself and can be captured in the ethnographic present, what then? How to render a description of cultural process that occurs in transcultural space in different locales at once in parallel separate but simultaneous worlds? (Marcus, 1990, 4)

The cultural process in a transcultural space was recognized not only by Marcus but also by anthropologists such as Clifford (1997) and in books such as *Culture, Power, Place* (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997). Part of the reason why anthropologists embraced this phenomenon was that it challenged the premise of anthropology itself: the idea of a geographically bounded conception of culture. Transnational studies in migration emerged to address these issues of transnational processes. However, Marcus and visual anthropologist Kiener seem to be among the few who raised the question of how to represent these migration processes in anthropology. They sought this solution in montage. Kiener talks about montage as a tool to represent migration processes:

Until recently the 'traveling cultures' of our time - migration, refugees, globalization, hybridization to mention just a few key words - have hardly had any impact on ethnographic filmmaking. Are there alternative cinematic poetics that are capable of understanding and conveying the experience of living in worlds of (dis)location and of (a)synchronism? This is precisely where montage comes into play... (Kiener, 2008, 393)

There is a difference between these two people, namely that Marcus focuses on the practice of writing, whereas Kiener writes and makes film. But both see in montage an inspiration to represent transnational migrational processes.

In the film *Ixok- Woman* (1990), Kiener shows the life of an actress named Carmen who has fled Guatemala and lives in exile in Germany. Kiener uses montage, typically in a scene where Carmen is performing on stage in Germany, and intercuts with a shot in Guatemala where soldiers are training. This montage is even more emotional because Carmen is performing the brutality of the military. This sequence shows her argument in practice, and montage does show a sense of dislocation which could not have been shown otherwise. The viewers get the feeling that her life itself is like a montage of life in Germany and life back in Guatemala.

However, from within the discipline of visual anthropology, there has been criticism towards their approach. Suhr and Willerslev are another pair of visual anthropologists who talk about montage in visual anthropology, but their discussion is a grand one, claiming to reintroduce the method of montage into visual anthropology itself. Their

claim is that montage can invoke the 'invisible' in its own right. The invisibility which only the camera can evoke is understood as the following:

...we shall explore the notion of invisible shared by Merleau-Ponty and Levinas as a perceptual impossibility, which although it may be imagined intellectually is not achievable from any one perspective. The invisibility here is understood to be an excess of visibility or an infinite totality of vision that cannot itself be accessed from any actual human perspective, but whose presence is the precondition for our possibility of perceiving anything - what Merleau-Ponty refers to as the norm and Levinas as the infinite Other... (Suhr and Willerslev, 2012, 286)

From this point, Suhr and Willerslev acknowledge both Marcus and Kiener as people who raised the issue on film and invisibility but, in the end, treat them as people who are literally trying to represent the invisible:

The problem with the globalization of the film gaze advocated by Marcus and Kiener is that it merely enlarges the field of visibility to a global scale rather than deal with the question of invisibility in its own right. (Suhr and Willerslev, 2012, 285)

Suhr and Willerslev's (2012) target is the observational cinema style which appears almost synonymous with ethnographic film in recent times.<sup>2</sup> As they describe it, the tradition of observational cinema investigates the viscosity of life which has not received attention, trying to keep faithful to the fact that the filmmaker is 'there'. In effect, observational cinema tries to be faithful to the perception of the filmmaker. What Suhr and Willerslev propose is to rediscover the camera eye: the way the camera sees the world is different from the way the human eye perceives the world. Suhr and Willerslev are attentive to this difference. This difference is something which the mimetic doctrine of observational cinema tries to erase. One example Suhr and

Willeslev bring up is the example of Dziga Vertov. An avant-garde filmmaker who has been the source of inspiration for both documentary and ethnographic filmmaking, he intentionally celebrates the fact that the film is made by the camera and uses all kinds of strategies to show that in the film *Man with a Movie Camera* (Vertov, 1929). Suhr and Willerslev's recognize Dziga Vertov as a predecessor to their vision.

Until now we have violated the movie camera and forced it to copy the work of our eye. The better the copy, the better the shooting was thought to be. Starting today we are liberating the camera and making it work in the opposite direction—away from copying. (Vertov, quoted in Roberts, 2000, 19)

To get beyond visibility they present montage. However, is montage the only way to get evoke invisibility? Wasn't evoking the invisible, such as emotions, what many films were trying to do in a way? The problem of their argument seems to lie in the way they present the observational style and montage in a strong contrast. By this strong contrast, their argument becomes somewhat reductive. What I want to take from their argument is that the observational style has a limit in that it wants to be faithful to the filmmaker's perception.

I presented these discussions in anthropology which revolve around the issue of migration and invisibility. How useful is it, though, in terms of my project? My project also involves a transnational process. However, representing a transnational process and representing simultaneity is a different thing. The discussions raised by Marcus

and Kiener do not address that difference. Especially in my case, the issue of a gap implies that there wouldn't be simultaneity.

The critique raised by Suhr and Willerslev identifies a limit that the observational style might have. And in that sense, it converges with the problematic of Marcus and Kiener. However, because their idea of invisibility is not clearly defined, what montage can actually contribute to is also unclear.

In my project, the gap that I identified is a temporal one and a geographical one. It is also about distance: a temporal distance and a geographical distance. However, from another view, it is also an epistemological gap. In a temporal sense, what one can see in the present sense does not provide the knowledge of what existed there before. In a geographical sense, what one can see here doesn't provide the whole story of what happened here.

#### [Sara Cooper, the gap of seeing and knowing](#)

At this point, I want to introduce the idea of a gap from a documentary theory context. Film researcher Sara Cooper discusses the idea of gap of seeing and knowing in her work. She does so to introduce the idea of ethics in documentary theory. However, this ethics is not about ethics on a judicial level which the word might suggest in this context. She does not talk about the issues of filming people without permission, etc. In the philosophy of Levinas, she sees the gap between the ethical and the epistemic and tries to translate this sense in the discussion of documentary theory. She poses

the question: how can a film avoid reducing the otherness of the other and being possessive? For example, she sees in Jean Rouch's documentary, *Moi, un Noir* (1958), a sense of a failed documentary.

...it is possible to equate Rouch's practice with what Sara Ahmed terms the 'ethnography of failure', whereby the ethnographer learns to know what s/he fails to know of those s/he studies. In the visual sphere, this incapacity fully to know the culture studied pivots on a gap between seeing and knowing that enables the ethnographic subject to escape possession by filmic means. (Cooper, 2006, 46)

Also, she sees this gap in the film *San Soleil* (1982) by Chris Marker.

Unlike the ethnographic desire to know...this film does not even try to get closer to those it observes with knowledge in mind. It is, rather, a deep reflection on remembering and forgetting such encounters, and on the relation that the filmic image bears to these processes. (Cooper, 2006, 51)

Interestingly enough, both of the films that Cooper uses as an example involve migration.<sup>3</sup> On a similar note, documentary theorist Michael Renov talks about ethics in documentary. By introducing ethics, Renov essentially questions the epistemological status that the documentary might have.

This pitting of ethics against epistemology is highly pertinent for documentary studies. When we talk about the prospects for documentary representation, we are most likely asking about knowledge: what can we know of history from this film, what can we learn about this person or that event, how persuaded can we be by this filmmaker's rhetorical ploys? The ethical view refuses this appropriative stance, choosing instead receptivity and responsibility, justice over freedom. (Renov, 2004, 161)

Both Cooper and Renov's views question documentary as being solely an epistemic project. Taking both their point leads to an interesting perspective on what the filmic space can allow. Cooper suggests the possibility of film being a space where one can practice the failure of knowing, which is the gap between seeing and knowing. This sense of limitation of knowing resonates with the analysis of the migration condition I have discussed so far. If we look back on the idea of the ontological invisibility and geographical invisibility, we see that seeing doesn't provide instant knowledge of the place. The image would not provide full knowledge of what took place in that place.

This sense of limitation does not necessarily involve montage. Indeed, Cooper does not talk about montage to discuss ethics. I do see the possibility of using montage in the sense of using gaps between shots as a space of practicing this gap of seeing and knowing. However, in this project, I give priority to creating a sense of this gap rather than using montage.

This idea is, in a way, a return to the feature of the trace which I proposed as a guiding concept in chapter 3. In the concept of trace, the gap of seeing and knowing is already embodied.<sup>4</sup> But how do we create a film to let the viewer experience this gap? Next, I move on to the actual creative strategy, and I focus on the delayed aspect of knowing. The trace also involved a belatedness, as I have discussed earlier. What if we translate this sense of gap through a delay? Film can introduce a literal delay in the viewer's experience and thereby make 'known' a gap of seeing and knowing. A delay would be

true to the gap of seeing and knowing and also give a sense of invisibility and distance.

First, I would talk about the temporal delay and the gap.

### Temporality, the gap

In this section and the next, I will clarify what the poetics of delay is in terms of past films and by comparing these past films to my film. I will take specific parts from my film to illustrate my creative strategy. Some of the past films that I use are not particularly related to migration because my aim for the film is to develop this poetics in terms of these gaps. I also want to note that this delay that I will be trying to describe is not what film researcher Laura Mulvey tries to describe through Kiarostami's films (Mulvey, 2006). The delay she describes is a delay in the narrative which can be actualized in film. The delay I want to achieve occurs between seeing and knowing. Also by the gap, I want to make clear that the film's purpose is not to expose the artificiality of the continuity of editing as done by Trinh T. Minh-ha in her film, *Reassemblage* (Dir Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1982). Trinh T. Minh-ha consciously tries to expose the transparency of the camera through montage and expose the power relations inherent in ethnographic filmmaking. My primary focus is to give a sense of a limitation regarding what an image can convey, and how through the film, I can convey a sense of delay in the gaps of seeing and knowing.

Researchers have identified urban space as a site which has a fundamental relationship with cinema (Dimendberg, 2004, Prat and Juan, 2014, Sheil and Fitzmaurice eds.,



2001). Kracauer, in particular, produced important discussions about the media's affinity with the 'street'. He argues that the street is where people encounter the flow of life, and that, 'the media's affinity for the flow of life would be enough to explain the attraction which the street has ever since exerted on the screen' (1997: 73). In my project, I focus on the urban memory aspects of urban space and its relation to film rather than street life in general. The theorists of urban memory whom I discussed in the last chapter more or less saw the retrieval of urban memory and its representation as the same. When we try to find a theorist who actually deals with the issue of representation in its own right, Freud reappears; he discussed indirectly the representation of urban space. Freud did not analyze urban space as such, but his use of urban space as a metaphor for the mind gives us a hint about the problem of representing a city's temporal layers. When discussing the mind, Freud took up Rome as a metaphor of a space where multiple layers of memory coexist and do not go away.

Their place is now taken by ruins, but not by ruins of themselves but of later restorations made after fires or destruction...There is certainly not a little that is ancient still buried in the soil of the city or beneath its modern buildings. This is the manner in which the past is preserved in historical sites like Rome. (Freud, 1930, 257)

We can see here that his grasp of urban space is quite similar to theorists such as Huyssen and Boyer in that Freud sees multiple and invisible layers which constitute the city. However, Freud seems to give up on this metaphor, because 'if we want to represent historical sequence in spatial terms we can only do it by juxtaposition in space: the same space cannot have two different contents' (Freud, 1930, 258).

The limit of this metaphor, however, gives us a useful hint about the limits of representing the memory of urban space. Because 'the same space cannot have two different contents', approaching urban space realistically is limiting in terms of its memory. What Freud describes here is the impossibility of representing these multiple layers of the city. It is impossible in the way that, realistically, it is impossible to simultaneously represent the absent traces and present traces. This representation can only happen in a dream. However, it is also true that 'the same space cannot have two different contents' does not mean the past layers do not exist. So how do we deal with these layers?

Here I find it useful to introduce the gap between seeing and knowing. What we want to evoke is how an image of the city does not present an epistemological fullness, the full knowledge of layers of history in an instant. But also, we want to convey that the layers exist. I propose a poetics of delay which postpones the arrival of 'knowing' for the viewer, after the act of 'seeing.'

We can think of the synagogue in Kobe as an example. If we were to show only a memory of the past, the matter is not so difficult. We could try to find a photograph of the old synagogue or footage of the synagogue and just show it. However, the representation of the urban space's temporal layers is more difficult to achieve. We have to show both the present synagogue and the past synagogue. So how can we show the present and also evoke a sense of the past with distance? I propose

introducing a delay in the seeing and knowing. In the section of the synagogue, I employ this poetics. First, I show the Rabbi talking about the old synagogue of which he has no personal memory inside the new synagogue. After this shot, I show the photo of the old synagogue. I tried here to communicate a sense of layers through the gap of seeing and knowing. The sense of absence is more accentuated because the Rabbi has no memory of the old synagogue. In this sense, also, the two shots perform a gap of seeing and knowing. The Rabbi has never seen the old synagogue, and through the image, we can see only the new synagogue. From the image, we cannot obtain full knowledge of the past. However, in the next shot, we see an old photo that depicts the old Synagogue. In the last chapter, I criticized the representation of urban memory at the Tenement Museum because of the way temporal distance is erased. Is the problematic of distance solved? Here, I try to create a sense of distance by the literal delay of the old image after viewers have seen the image of the new synagogue. I tried to translate the sense of distance via the temporal delay in the filmic space.



*Figure 9 Rabbi David in current Synagogue, frame grab from footage*



*Figure 10 photo of old synagogue with titles(photo from figure 4)*

For this reason, I repeat the same panning shot of the synagogue in this section. I use this shot at the beginning of the section and repeat it again. The image does not provide epistemological fullness, which would also imply that many 'layers' could be hidden in this image that we don't 'know' at that moment. I repeat the same shot of the synagogue in this section to show that, in a way, the gap of seeing and knowing always exists.

I would like to compare my strategy to a film about the Jewish past in Berlin called *Persistence* (1997). The director shows a range of buildings in Berlin which are inscribed with the remnant outline of a once attached building. In these shots, the buildings are treated as traces, and the film evokes the catastrophe of the city of Berlin. However, I argue that it fails to show the sense of lost layers in Berlin. The film shows past footage of Berlin to show how the city once was but presents the footage in a manner which lacks distance. The footage is accompanied by sound recorded in the present which demonstrates the lack of awareness of the gap.

Another documentary which does not deal with migration in particular but deals in the urban memory of Los Angeles is *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (2004) by Thom Andersen.<sup>5</sup>

Using both fiction and documentaries which take place in the city of Los Angeles, the film attempts to tell the history of Los Angeles through sounds and images. The film sometimes shows a building from a film and compares it to a more recent image of the building. Through this comparison, the film does convey that there are lost histories in the city of Los Angeles. However, a viewer does not get a sense of limited knowledge (historical) that I try to convey in my project.

I have discussed the poetics of delay to represent a sense of temporal layers. However, to achieve sense, I would have to have access to images of the past. But if we don't have access to those images, what do we do? This problematic has been addressed before. One pair of filmmakers who have dealt with this problem are Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub,<sup>6</sup> a couple who have been making films that are radical both in their content and form. One of the themes of their work is absence. They seem obsessed with evoking traces of history which are unable to be recorded at the present. They evoke the invisible past by combining images and sounds. In *Too Early, Too late* (1981), they shoot a seemingly anonymous field in Egypt. In terms of visuality, no traces can be seen here. But then Straub/Huillet combine a voice-over with the image. The voice-over is a reading of a text by an Egyptian activist Mahmoud Hussein, who analyzes the uprisings in Egypt against the British Empire. No traces of the uprisings are visible in the shot, but because of the use of sound, the invisible past is

evoked. Deleuze describes other films by Straub/Huillet, *Dalla Nube alla Resistenza* (1979) and *Fortini Cani* (1976), and discusses their tactics.

...people talk in an empty space, and, while speech rises, the space is sunk into the ground and does not let us see it, but make its archaeological burials, its stratigraphic thickness readable; it testifies to the work that had to be done and the victims slaughtered in order to fertilize a field, the struggles that took place and the corpses thrown out. (Deleuze, 2005, 244)

In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze sees the potential of a talkie film in their strategy, but in my project, I would like to use the combination of sound and images to evoke the invisible past. Deleuze calls this the archaeological image. Film researcher Jeffrey Skoller articulates the theoretical question implied by the archaeological image very well: 'This kind of inscription raises the question of whether or not past events inhere in the landscapes in which we live - even if there is no material evidence of the events themselves' (Skoller, 2005, 103). The lack of material evidence does not lead to the impossibility of evoking such pasts. Film does have the potential to respond to such a question by combining sound and image. I argue that this strategy is also a practice of a poetics of delay, a poetics of the gap of seeing and knowing. The image corresponds to seeing and the sound to knowing (historical). The image does not convey to us everything about the place, but the narration suggests the knowing and reminds us also of the limits of seeing, creating a gap between seeing and knowing. Also, a sense of belatedness comes from using a text that is older than the image.

To put it into a more urban context, cultural theorist de Certeau acknowledged this kind of absence hidden in the city. He states that,

It is striking here that the places people live in are like the presences of diverse absences. What can be seen designates what is no longer there: 'You see here there used to be...,' but it can be no longer seen. Demonstratives indicate the invisible identities of the visible... (Certeau, 1984, 108)

In this passage, Certeau acknowledges the presence of absences which exist in the city. More importantly, he suggests that belated words can evoke the 'presence' of these absences. This insight is almost identical to Straub/Huillet's idea.

Now, to illustrate a difference, I would like to talk about the films of Patrick Keiller. In his work, *London* (1994), the narrator talks about the histories of London, and images related to this history are shown. Is Keiller combining sound and images to evoke the absent histories in London? Yes, but what I feel lacking is a strategy of belatedness in his films. In Straub/Huillet's work, the viewer senses a distance between the past and the present. As Byg states, 'In Straub/Huillet's films there is no mourning, no melancholy. They simply show the fragments of the world that is lost. The distance to the past is inviolable' (Byg, 1995, 45). Rather, in Keiller's work, there is melancholia, and the absences of the past seem only to serve the melancholia of the fictional narrator. Indeed, film researcher Timothy Corrigan, who treats Keiller's work as an essay film, describes the film as being 'an obituary for urban life' (Corrigan, 2011, 114).

In terms of my practice, Keller's work does not seem to practice this gap of seeing and knowing in the filmic space, and the narrator's melancholia only seems to serve as an illustration of the place being seen.

In my film, I use sound and image in the section about Mr. Moche's tour through Kobe. Particularly at one point in the alley, he is trying to find a building which was not there, for which even the traces seem to be gone. We can tell he is following some kind of memory in his mind. We are able to recognize this gap, this absence, with the descriptive words he uses and the landscape which surrounds him. This gap was not achieved through manipulation of images and sounds, but as an effect, the circumstances provide what I try to convey. The image does not give entire knowledge of the place, yet the words speak of a past, giving a sense of belatedness.



*Figure 11 Mr. Moche trying to find a house, frame grab from footage*



Also, in the latter part of the section, I show Mr. Moche and the people of the Jewish community searching for some trace. I juxtapose the sound of Mr. Moche talking with Mr. Iwata about the map with this image. I do so because in a sense they are both doing the same activity, trying to find a lost trace. Though the sound and image don't match in terms of content, the intention of both activities are the same, highlighting the act of finding the trace.



*Figure12 Mr. Moche explaining history to new members of community, frame grab from footage*

### [The geographical gap](#)

In talking about the geographical gap, I would like to go back to the discussion of Marcus on montage. Marcus saw that montage is ideal for dealing with parallel and simultaneous worlds. Particularly when he talks of representing the simultaneity of the world, he quotes Cohen, who chooses to use the filmmaker D.W. Griffith as an example:

Under ordinary circumstances cinema cannot any more than literature, present simultaneously two noncontiguous, noncoterminous events. Parallel editing however is the technique that most nearly achieves this effect. (Cohen, quoted in Marcus, 1990, 8)

Thus, he seems to suggest using Griffith's parallel editing to represent simultaneity. The logic seems obvious. Compared to writing, cinema represents simultaneity more effortlessly. In terms of my project, I deal with a transnational process. However, what I argue in the geographical gap is that I won't know everything at the same time and place. Therefore, the illusion of simultaneity created by Griffith betrays the feature of this project. As in the previous argument of the temporal gap, I would like to make the viewer feel the gap of seeing and knowing through a delay in the filmic space. At this time, we need to remind ourselves of what the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty described.

In the footsteps of science and painting, philosophy and, above all, psychology seem to have woken up to the fact that our relationship to space is not that of a pure disembodied subject to a distant object but rather that of a being which dwells in space relating to its natural habitat...Here for the first time we come across the idea that rather than a mind and a body, man is a mind with a body, a being who can only get to the truth of things because its body is, as it were, embedded in those things. (Merleau-Ponty, 2008, 42-43)

By quoting Merleau-Ponty, I am not advocating a phenomenological approach; I am trying to emphasize the conditions of human perception. Because we are located in a

particular location, the geographical gap which I pointed out in the previous chapter emerges.

In the context of my project, let's take Kobe for example. I have noted that there are different traces that exist in Kobe and New York. If the filmmaker were to be in Kobe and try to be faithful to his perception, he would only find the traces that would exist in Kobe. Also, if the filmmaker were only faithful to the perception in New York, he would only know the traces there. So either way, being faithful to the perception of the place where the filmmaker is located produces a gap. These traces exist simultaneously. However, we experience them as a gap or a distance. I will translate this geographical gap also in terms of a gap of seeing and knowing and as a delay which is created through the late arrival of knowing. Now, I will discuss past films to make identify the issues in translating the geographical gap.

In terms of representing global processes in a more geographical sense, one film that makes that attempt is Amos Gitai's *Pineapple (Ananas)* (1983). It is not a film about migration but a documentary about the multinational company Dole that grows and sells pineapples as one of their products. However, in the treatment of this topic, the film shows the invisible which emerges in the global process of production and distribution. The film even manages to show that these invisibilities are structural and that they are the condition of exploitation. A researcher of film and also arts in general, Laura Marks treats the film as an example of how cinema can follow a

transnational object, which is certainly true, but I would like to see the attention to invisibility performed in this film (Marks, 2000, 97).

Ananas starts with shots of a city, which is presumably New York, and then the film moves its stage to Hawaii, where the exploitation takes place. In Hawaii, we are shown farmers working in the field. Then we move on to North America where people who work in the factories are assembling the pineapple cans. At the same time, the executives are interviewed somewhere else, beside a pool, or in an office, or in a room, seemingly disconnected from the places where the exploitation is taking place. The film shows these processes and juxtaposes them. We are given the impression that these processes are connected and disconnected at the same time. They are connected because evidently these processes are a part of a multinational company's operation and disconnected because of the contrasting realities of exploitation in Hawaii and the luxurious accommodations of the executives. The invisibilities, which are at work here, are geographical ones. Though they are part of the same operation, the executives and the workers seem invisible to each other. Their realities seem to be out of reach on both sides. So when the film juxtaposes these processes, we experience the emergence of these invisibilities that are produced as part of this global multinational operation. In this sense, the operation of montage here is not merely an aesthetic one but also an analytical one. When the film returns to New York, and the camera shows the view from a moving car crossing over the Brooklyn Bridge, we come back to the place, feeling that this bridge is not only independent from other places in the world but also a part and a site of a global process.

The film succeeds in showing through global processes what is difficult to see from an individual point of view. This difficulty is what the Marxist literary critic Fredric Jameson responded to when formulating the idea of 'cognitive mapping':

At this point the phenomenological experience of the individual subject - traditionally, the supreme raw material of the work of art - becomes limited to a tiny corner of the social world, a fixed-camera view of a certain section of London or the countryside or whatever. But the truth of that experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place. The truth of that limited daily experience of London lies, rather in India or Jamaica or Hong Kong; it is bound up with the whole colonial system of the British Empire that determines the individual's subjective life. Yet those structural coordinates are no longer accessible to immediate lived experience and are often not even conceptualizable for most people. (Jameson, 1991, 411)

He points out that just being attentive to a local, subjective view is not enough to understand the system in which the individual subject is embedded. To tackle this problem, Jameson uses urban theorist Kevin Lynch's idea of cognitive mapping. He sees in Lynch's idea of cognitive mapping, a gap, a gap between 'the here and now of immediate perception and the imaginative or imaginary sense of the city as an absent totality' (Jameson, 1991, 415). Jameson's conception of cognitive mapping extrapolates Lynch's analysis to the 'totality of class relations on a global (or should I say multinational) scale' (Jameson, 1991, 416). In this sense, the film can be seen as a practice of 'cognitive mapping' through montage. The use of montage addresses the gap (the invisibility) between the individual point of view and the 'totality' of the operation of a multinational company.

In terms of my project, this gap relates to my idea of the gap in terms of the awareness of the limitations of one point of view. However, Jameson's use of the idea of totality does not correspond to my discussions. Are we in a position to have 'total' vision? I argue that the film, too, runs this risk. Although it is attentive to the geographical gaps and invisibility, the film risks giving the impression of a total perspective and thus giving a full epistemology of the operation.

Is there an in-between space between a sense of a limited individual perspective and a 'total' perspective? Now, I would like to discuss *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* (Mekas dir. 1972), a film that is conscious of these gaps and incompleteness. The director Jonas Mekas makes a trip back to Lithuania after 27 years and records images of his home in Lithuania. These shots are not assembled in a narrative manner. Rather, the film seems to be merely composed of shots of the family and shots of the landscape which the director took when he returned. This effect already gives a sense of incompleteness and fragmentariness. Even between these shots, blanks are inserted to give a further sense of incompleteness and fragmentariness. The director puts his voice over these shots. It should be noted that these voice overs are obviously presented as a narrative which was recorded after the director came back from Lithuania. They are not intended to give a sense of simultaneity of the time when this trip was made. Film researcher Catherine Russell is critical of the way that Mekas directed this film.

The longing for the past that Mekas expresses constructs memory as a means of splitting oneself across a number of different axes: child and adult, old world and new, pastoral and metropolitan, natural and cultural. Filmmaking is inscribed in a film such as *Reminiscences* as the means of transcending this splitting. (Russell, 1999, 285)

I disagree with this view because, as I have already pointed out, the gap between these different axes is deliberately presented to accentuate it. In this film, Mekas seems to try to construct memory and at the same time show the gaps which make the construction difficult. Michael Renov, a theorist of the documentary, makes a similar point in terms of the narration and image.

The spectator is constantly reminded of the distance that separates the profilmic event and the voiced narration written years afterwards. Mekas's vocal inflections themselves enforce the separation, the words delivered with a hesitancy, a weary delight in their sonorous possibilities. (Renov, 2004, 76)

Renov partly sees this fragmentary nature of the film as a result of its essayistic mode. I wouldn't disagree with the autobiographical nature of Mekas's film, but if we reduce the film to such a practice, I think we risk losing the gaps to which the film tries to be attentive. I see the fragmentary nature of the film as more of a result of the spatial and temporal gaps. The film successfully evades a sense of simultaneity through the literal delay of the narration which implies spatial but also temporal distance. In this way, it expresses the limitations of one point of view, but the risk here is that the distance becomes too subjectivized. Doesn't a spatial gap exist in spite of the narrator? The way the images seem to give almost no knowledge whatsoever seems to convey this impression even more.

In that sense, perhaps more close to my project in terms of spatial gaps is Suleiman's film, *Homage by Assassination* (1991). In Suleiman's film, we only see him inside a room. He also seemed to be disconnected from the other world, demonstrated in the way a phone call is unable to reach him. He seems unable to respond to the world which comes to him through media descriptions of the Iraq War. Naficy sees this film as an impassioned letter-film to the world (Naficy, 2001, 118). However, I see in this film an attempt to make known or being true to the spatial gap. During the film, the protagonist does respond to a couple's fight that happens just outside the window. However, he doesn't respond to the phone-calls which occur. In this comparison, I see a creation of a gap. It is as if he is trying to stay true to the not knowing. This is not a return to a 'total' vision, or a return to melancholy.

In terms of the issue of sound and image in geographical invisibility, I would like to present the film *News from Home* (Akerman dir. 1977) as an example. This film is ambitious yet simple, composed of shots of New York and a voice-over reading letters from a mother who lives elsewhere. Because the letters are written from elsewhere, we are constantly reminded of the placed-ness of the shots, and also of how distant the mother's (speech) is. In a juxtaposition of sound and image, the film manages to convey the gap of geographical absence rather than of the temporal absence. We are forced to experience the here-ness of NY compared to the there-ness of the letter. The fixed shots emphasize this remove, and it is only natural that the last shot of the film is a long shot from a boat leaving the city. We are leaving the 'here' and going somewhere else.<sup>7</sup> I found this strategy quite similar to what I am doing, but in comparison to my film, the purpose of the



gap seems to be different. Here, the content of the letter does not really relate to what is shown in the image. In my case, the gap created is also a gap of seeing and knowing and involves some knowing about a place.

In terms of my film, the synagogue section exemplifies such a poetics. When people talk about the synagogue, they mean its past in different locations, such as in Kobe and New York. The shots are taken in different locations, but they talk about the same place in Kobe. Talking in a different place gives the sense of a gap between seeing and knowing. For example, when we learn about the synagogue from the dialogue in New York, the knowledge arrives later in the film, making the spatial gap more accentuated. In addition, when we see the photos of Kobe in New York in the last scene, I could have chosen to show these photos by themselves in Kobe. But I chose to show them to accentuate not only the temporal gap but also the spatial gap that is inherent in the photos. I chose to show the photos of Kobe which are being looked at in New York, which implies a spatial gap and a sense of limitation because of this setting.



*Figure 12 Watching photos in New York. frame grab from footage*

### Description of the film in terms of the poetics of delay

Now, I would like to describe other scenes in the film in terms of the poetics of delay to clarify my argument.

The film is composed of six parts. These different parts all address the problem of how to find and represent the Jewish traces of Kobe, but each section is not treated as a part of a whole. Each part does reflect on one another, but each is intended to be independent. This approach is designed to reflect the difficulty of knowing the Jewish memory/history of Kobe.

### Introduction

In the Introduction, I try to give a sense of Kobe where there are traces of a past. Rather than trying to contextualize the Jewish community in a historical narrative, the film seeks to describe the community as part of an urban space which is filled with traces. This approach reflects my argument on the urban trace in chapter 5. Also, in the voice-over, I ask; 'how can we see the Jewish past of Kobe?' This voice-over is intended to sensitize the audience to the gap between seeing and knowing.

### Section 1

I start off the film with the section centered on the Synagogue. The Synagogue is a material trace which signifies the existence of a community. In terms of the poetics of

delay, I repeat the photo of the prince visiting. After presenting the photo through the discussion with Dalia Anavian, I return to the Synagogue to show the photo again. Like repeating the shot of the Synagogue, the repetition of the photo gives a sense of belatedness, implying that there might be more to 'know' from the photo.<sup>8</sup>

In the voice-over in the beginning I ask; 'Is a building just a space or can it be a trace to the past?' This question is there to sensitize the audience in seeing the Synagogue as a trace.

## Section 2

In the next section on the Jewish cemetery, as I argued in the first chapter, the graves are a prime example of a trace in the sense that they do not illustrate a preexisting fixed history but do allow visitors to imagine a history. In that sense, having a person there to shoot the graves is important because it suggests that the image of a grave does not give him instant knowledge about some pre-existing history. He is a member of the community, but he himself is someone arriving late, and his act of taking photos demonstrates that.

In the beginning, I add a voice-over; 'Visiting a cemetery is a journey to the past. Maybe a past that we forgot that we lost.' This is to sensitize the audience that we are not just visiting a space, but also a space which we can access a forgotten past.

### Section 3

This section focuses on the David Moche's practice of searching for the traces of the Jewish Community to show that a member of the community looks for traces and imply that there is no established history in this community. At the end of this section, to give a sense of how seeing and knowing is divided spatially, and that the knowing is also taking place in a different place, what started as a talk from New York comes back to the talk in New York.

### Section 4

This section was the most difficult to compose. As I discussed in Chapter 3, I chose to focus on the community, but at the same time we cannot ignore the history of the Jewish refugees. I tried to solve that issue by showing two processes of trace finding in a place: first people talking about the refugee traces in Kobe and also in a museum in Washington, DC. The traces have different meanings in different contexts.

In the voice-over in the beginning, I ask; 'where are the traces of displacement? Is it here or there?' This is to sensitize the viewer to the problematic of geographical traces and its contexts.

After the voice-over, we hear the museum curator explaining that he didn't understand how the photo was from Kobe. I would also like to note that this photo

was shown in the beginning of the film, but I didn't explain it until this stage. This fact evokes the trace aspect of the photo even more.

When I show the material traces of the Jewish refugees, I go back to the synagogue in Kobe to show that the traces can belong to both 'contexts', as it were. The traces can belong to the context of the Jewish community of Kobe or the context of the larger history of the Holocaust. By right, the traces can belong to both contexts.

### Section 5

In the last section, I return to New York where the David Moche and his mother look through the photos of Kobe. In terms of the poetics of delay, we witness that even for them, some of the photos don't mean anything. Even David Moche cannot recognize his father's face in the photo. He sees the photo, but it does not give him full knowledge. When he shows the album to me, he finds out that many of the photos are missing. However, I do not intend for this to be a sad moment. As I said, material traces are gone, but there is a past in a place.

### Ending

I conclude the film walking through Kobe with a camera. This scene repeats what I showed in the beginning. This scene reminds the viewer that the search is not conclusive, but at the same time, the scene suggests that even if we do not 'know' anything in the shot, we don't need to assume that nothing is there. In the same way that I repeated the shot of the synagogue in the synagogue section, I show the city to

suggest a delay that any kind of knowing can arrive at any moment. Therefore, putting the shot of Kobe at the end makes sense.

### Music

The choice of the music also corresponds to the poetics of delay. I chose a type of drone music which gives a sense of an echo, as if it were probing into the invisible layers of the city. I use this music three times in the film, first in the beginning where I briefly give fragments of the film before the title. The music thus establishes the tone of the film. I use the music next before the last section five to signify the beginning of the film's ending. Also, I wanted to remind the viewers that we have come back again to the synagogue that the film showed in the first section. I use the music the third time for the credits to conclude the film.

### [The poetics of delay and the issue of knowledge through film](#)

Firstly, I would like to point out that the sense of 'ethics' drawn from Sara Cooper's theorizations is different from Clive Cezeaux's discussion of the ethics of practice-based research. Cezeaux argues that once art is regarded as a form of research and therefore a contribution to knowledge, ethical issues arise because then art has to be considered knowledge by the relevant community (Cezeaux, 2003). Though I do not disagree with his argument, his sense of ethics concerns practice-based research as a whole and is separate from the issue of 'ethics' that I have discussed so far.

I have argued for a poetics of film where the filmic place is where the gap between seeing and knowing can be performed. A question then ensues concerning whether film can be an epistemic object in itself. Questions ensue not only in the social sciences such as visual anthropology but about knowledge in terms of practice-based research. For example, the book *Art Practice as Research* (Sullivan, 2005) argues that art can be knowledge through the theories advanced by cognitive science. However, what I suggest through my project is that if we see images as a trace, then the image does not linearly correspond to knowledge per-se. The image as a trace suggest that already a belatedness, a gap, exists. I tried to follow Sara Cooper's idea and to see film as a place to identify a gap in terms of seeing and knowing. This in itself questions how film can be knowledge in a simple sense. However, the film itself can be seen as a practice of failing to know through seeing, and in that sense, as a reflexive activity. This reflexivity does not refer to the subject position of the filmmaker but questions the linear relationship from seeing to knowing in filmmaking. Therefore, the poetics of delay is a reflexive performance in terms of knowledge.

Another question I asked myself through the research is whether film was the appropriate medium to perform and execute this type of reflexivity. Visual anthropologist Steffen Köhn offers a different solution to the conundrum of observational style and montage as proposed by Suhr and Willerslev, whom I discussed earlier (Köhn, 2014). He chooses to use an observational style film for two films happening simultaneously but in a different place. Thus, the idea behind this kind of installation is that if viewers move their heads, they themselves will be performing a montage. This method is close to one of the ideas that I had in the process of making

this film. What if I just design an installation according to each location (Kobe, NY, DC) and let each visual installation represent each memory location? The viewer would find the connection of each place's memory, as it were. Also, each location would literally be in a different space. However, in light of the gaps between seeing and knowing that I articulated in chapter 5 and chapter 6, I concluded that this kind of representation wouldn't be able to convey that sense. Certainly, a gap would exist in a sense that there would be no total perspective all at once. However, this type of installation would not allow the viewer to discern the ontological gap and the geographical gap that I described. Moreover, the viewer needs a filmic space that forces the viewer to experience this gap through the literal gap of seeing and knowing. In this sense, film was an appropriate mode of expression to execute this poetic, and the project as a whole led me to rediscover film in a new way.



## Conclusion

In Chapter 1, I explain the methodological aspect of this project. This project is based on my fieldwork experience and relies on a set of interdisciplinary reference to examine the experience of my fieldwork. The project also roughly follows the three conditions which architect and theorist Paul Carter suggests an 'invention' responds to in terms of practice-based research. He argues that the invention has to 'describe a forming situation', 'articulate the discursive and plastic intelligence of materials' and has to 'establish the necessity of design' (Carter, 2009, 21). In Chapter 2, I present the local history of Kobe and describe the experience of fieldwork which was quite different to what I imagined. The fieldwork experience leads to questions about how the film can and should be. As I discuss in the last chapter 6, the poetics of delay would not have been formulated had the fieldwork experience been what I expected.

The analysis and understanding of the situation is executed in chapter 3, 4 and 5 through a multidisciplinary reference. In chapter 3, I propose the concept of trace as useful for understanding the migratory situation of the Jewish community. The concept of trace is proposed to address the question of how to access a 'past' which is seemingly gone. I also develop the idea of a spatial trace which is useful for understanding another aspect of the migratory trace.

In chapter 4, I discuss the issue of context. The lack of memory and history means the lack of context for the Jewish community on its own terms. How do you tell a story of a

community which lacks context? I discuss the issues involved in this situation and explain my pre-stylistic decisions for the project through this condition.

In chapter 5, I see the situation from a material (and also immaterial) urban space point of view. The question of the trace connects directly with the idea of urban space, in a sense that urban space is where the migrant traces are inscribed. I discuss the Hayden's theorization which treats the urban space, migration and traces in one perspective; I point out her work's limitations as well. At the end of the chapter, I argue that not only are material traces important; invisible traces are as well. The issue of how to represent these gaps and traces are discussed fully in the next chapter, and the issue of representation is also what leads to the creative strategy of the film.

In chapter 6, I discuss the issue of representation of the gaps created by migrant traces and present a poetics which I call the poetics of delay. I begin by examining visual anthropology studies which discuss issues on representing migration. After some examination, I conclude that this framework is not enough and introduce Sara Cooper's discussion on ethics which she developed through Levinas's philosophy. She points out the gap of seeing and knowing which can be detected in some films. The filmic place is suggested as the location where this gap of seeing and knowing can be performed. I use this idea to translate the gaps that I identified in the last chapter, and I propose the poetics of delay. In the poetics of delay, the audience experiences the knowing only after seeing, therefore sensitizing the audience to this gap. This delay makes the viewer feel and learn of the gaps which confront the Jewish community of Kobe through an audiovisual manipulation. If we look back on the idea of a trace as I formulated in the

first chapter, the trace itself was an embodiment of the gap between seeing and knowing. A trace would not necessarily give one definitive knowledge of what had happened before. The poetics of delay is a result of conceptualization and analysis based on fieldwork experience and is a culmination of both fieldwork and past literature.

### [Migration, film and fragility](#)

This film is about migration, but I myself as a cinematographer and director had to travel to different locations to make this film happen. I had to travel to three locations internationally for this film. These multiple locations obviously made it difficult to create the film in terms of logistics and finance. Furthermore, multiple locations made it difficult to reshoot the film if there were something wrong with the footage, and this situation did occur. Some of the footage was shot in SD format by accident.

I decided to reshoot the scenery of the city of Kobe used in the beginning of the film as well as the image of the synagogue in Brooklyn, and I asked friends from Kobe and New York to reshoot these sections. I did not go back to the location; I gave them some instructions about what kind of shots I needed, and I used these shots in the final film. Had I had the time, I would have gone to shoot the scenes myself, but I was based in Brighton at the time, and I chose efficiency instead.

Looking back, I think one of the reasons that I failed in these shots comes from the fact that I performed too many roles. In this film, I did most of the work myself. I did not

have an assistant in the shooting, so I was doing the sound recording as well. In a sense, there are fewer questions in terms of the film's authorship which could offer potential issues to discuss. And my doing all the roles made the logistics of the film easier (because there was less scheduling to do).

However, this technical issue made me think of more fundamental issues. Some of the photos used in the project were not shot by me anyway. Why then would it matter that some shots were also not taken by me? And wouldn't it be betraying my intentions if I had reshot the film, since I was basing the project on the idea of the trace? These thoughts made me question the whole project. And, when I look back on the discussions and aesthetic choices I made, I realize this project was inspired by the sense of fragility or ephemerality: the fragility of history or memory of migration. The conceptualization of the trace comes from the recognition of this fragility. The idea of conviviality that I discuss in chapter 3 also comes from the recognition of this fragility and of sharing this fragility with the Jewish community. The progression of my investigation's scope from material traces to invisible traces stems from a further awareness of fragility as well.

Thus, I decided that reshooting the opening scene and synagogue in Boston still wouldn't ruin that sense of fragility. Perhaps illustrating my point with another film on migration would make my point clearer. *The Nine Muses* (Akomfrah dir 2010) is a film which is similar to mine in its subjects. It deals with the history of post-colonial migration to the UK, urban space, etc. However, compared to my approach, the film seems to float freely between time and space. Or rather, the filmic space is treated as a

free space which can transcend time and space. When we see a person who is shot in a winter landscape, I think that if this landscape had been shot 10 years ago or 10 years later, the timing wouldn't make a difference. Compared to this approach, I believe my film gives the impression that we are limited to the here and now. This limitedness leads to sense of fragility and the sense of delay which I tried to formulate as a poetics of delay in the final chapter of the film.

Due to my concentration on the fragile conditions of the Jewish history, my contribution to the actual Jewish history might not be significant. As my film was focused on the condition of knowing the history, it could be argued that the effort of constructing a coherent history of the community remains to be done. The film points to the traces where the research can start. Should I have tried to collect facts from the communities' history and construct an historical narrative? This is one way to talk about the history of migration, and as I have discussed in chapter 4, this method falls under the politics of recognition. However, as I tried to show by the examination of Hayden's argument in the same chapter, this approach leaves out the issue of disappeared traces. In this project, I focused on how to convey the gaps which might get overlooked when research tries to present a constructed history of a community in a place.

### [Sounds and images](#)

Through the discussion of the gap of seeing and knowing, the project touches on the problematic of language and images. I discuss ways of combining sound and image to

practice the poetics of delay. Following visual studies researcher W.J.T. Mitchell's view, I see film as being more mixed media than visual media, and I don't see combining sound and images as an exception.<sup>1</sup> However, because I discuss the gap between seeing and (historical) knowing, I might have pursued a deeper discussion of the properties of language and the image than what I present here. What is the essential difference of knowing by language and by the image? This question leads to my interest in a future project. Naficy suggests that epistolary media (such as letters) have an essential relationship with accented film. I find a letter a very fascinating medium because the existence of a letter already implies a kind of delay. Also, the topic would accommodate the exploration of the problematic of language and image. (What is the difference between seeing a letter and reading it?) For my future project, I am interested in exploring the possibility of a film centered round a letter from a past that involves migration issues.

## Footnotes

### Chapter 2

1. The word *Kansai* is commonly used in contrast to *Kanto* which refers to the greater Tokyo area. Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo and Okayama Prefectures are commonly referred to as Kansai.
2. Itoh argues that the mentality developed within this period can explain the resistance of Japan to globalization. See Itoh, M. (1998) *Globalization of Japan: Japanese Sakoku Mentality and U.S. Efforts to Open Japan*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
3. For a detailed research on the killing of Korean people after the earthquake, see Yamada, S. (2011) 関東大震災時の朝鮮人虐殺とその後—虐殺の国家責任と民衆責任. Tokyo: 創史社
4. For a description of the activity of the NGO, see Eda, H. (2015) Disaster Justice: Mobilizing grassroots knowledge against disaster nationalism in Japan. in Jolivet, A.J. (ed) *Research Justice: Methodologies for Social Change*. Bristol; Chicago: Policy Press p.95-108
5. For a detailed history of foreigner's cemeteries in Japan, see Swanson, D. L. (2010) A place for the dead: the foreign cemeteries of Kobe and Osaka 1867-to the present day. In 神戸大学 日本文化論年報 vol.13 p.65-86
6. See Also Shatzkes, P. (1991) Kobe: A Japanese haven for Jewish refugees, 1940–1941. *Japan Forum*. [Online] 3 (2), 257–273.
7. A documentary called *Visa and Virtue* (Tahsima dir, 1997) deals with this story.
8. The Jewish Community of Kansai runs the synagogue in Kobe and has a website. See Jewish Community of Kansai, (n.d.)
9. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum organized an exhibition called *Flight and Rescue* (2001). The exhibition showed the story of 2100 Polish Jews who had escaped eastern Europe and came to Japan. For this exhibition, the museum managed to get interviews of people who passed through Kobe. See Museum, U. S. H. M. (2001) *Flight and Rescue*. Washington, DC: University of Washington Press.
10. See Moche, S. David and Sopher, L. (n.d.) *History of Jewish Kobe, Japan* [online] Available from:  
<http://historyofjewishkobejapan.blogspot.co.uk/2009/11/hi.html>
11. Naficy presents letters, a telephone conversation, a video, or an e-mail message as the forms of epistle. He also categorises epistolarity films into three types: film-letters,

telephone epistles, and letter-films. See See Naficy, H. (2001) *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. P.101

### Chapter 3

1. Rothberg has problematized the direct link between memory and identity with the concept of multidirectional memory. See Rothberg, M. (2009). *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonisation*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
2. For a study of Jewish identity in Japan, see Izumi, S. (1998) ‘在日ユダヤ人における民族的アイデンティティの伝達・継承・喪失に関する一考察’ 東洋学園大学紀要 Vol.6  
1998年3月
3. It should be noted that photography is given special status as a medium to record such traces in Benjamin’s thought.
4. Ricoeur calls traces that are not written testimonies ‘vestiges of the past’. Tools, coins, remains of buildings, etc., are these vestiges and a target of archeology (Ricoeur 2009, 170) See Ricoeur, P. (2009) *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
5. Another problem with her idea of prosthetic memory is that though she discusses how film can serve as prosthetic memory, she does not elaborate on the form of the film itself. Can any film become prosthetic memory? I indirectly try to answer this question in chapter 6. For a critique of Landsberg’s idea of prosthetic memory, see Kilbourn, R. J. A. (2011) *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representation of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema*. London: Routledge
6. Film researcher Colin McCabe points out the same difference but also describes how similar their theories are. See McCabe, C. (1997) ‘Barthes and Bazin: The ontology of the image’ in Rabate, J.-M. (ed) (1997) *Writing the Image After Roland Barthes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

### Chapter 4

1. Levy and Sznajder suggest that the shared memory of the Holocaust provides the foundation of a new ‘cosmopolitan memory’ not confined to national frameworks. See Levy, D and Sznajder, N. (2006) *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*. Philadelphia, USA: Temple University Press.



2. For foundational issues on the representation of the Holocaust, see Friedlander, S. (ed.) (1992) *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
3. I learned this fact from Hamid Naficy's description of the film. See Naficy, H. (2001) *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. P.117
4. For a discussion of the concept of context in the social sciences, see Dilley, R. (ed.) (1999) *The Problem of Context* New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

## Chapter 5

1. There are arguments against the logic of recognition. For example, Patchen Markell argues that recognition of identities is more of a problem than a solution and proposes the shift from recognition to acknowledgement. See Markell, P. (2009) *Bound by Recognition*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.
2. For a collection of debates on representing migration history in museums, see Gourievidis, L. (ed) (2014) *Museums and Migration: History, Memory and Politics*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

## Chapter 6

1. The areas are 1. Problematising the spatial, 2. Problematising the temporal, 3. Problematising perspective/voice, 4. The dialogic appropriation of concepts and narrative devices, 5. Bifocality, and 6. Critical juxtapositions and contemplations of alternative possibilities.
2. Anthropologist Anna Grimshaw argues that Kiener's understanding of observational cinema is reductive. See Grimshaw, A. (2013) In Defense of Observational Cinema: The Signification of the Bazanian Turn for Ethnographic Filmmaking. In Suhr, C. & Willerslev, R. (ed) (2013) *Transcultural Montage*. New York: Berghahn Books.
3. Hamid Naficy sees *San Soleil* (1982) as a film that problematizes the travelogue genre. See Naficy, H. (2001) *An Accented Cinema: Exilic and Diasporic Filmmaking*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. P.148-151
4. It is a little puzzling that Sara Cooper does not discuss the idea of the trace, since Levinas also philosophizes the trace.
5. Andersen refers to the film *The Exiles* (Dir Mackenzie, 1961) which is about young Native Americans living in the lost neighborhood of Bunker Hill, Los Angeles. In this sense, Andersen is referring to a lost migrational history of the city.
6. For an extensive discussion of their films, see Byg, B. (1995) *Landscapes of Resistance: The German Films of Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

7. Corrigan treats the film as mode of an essay film. See Corrigan, T. (2011) *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*. New York: Oxford University Press.
8. The shot of the photo in the Synagogue in the end of the sequence is cut from the final version of the film, because of the video resolution mismatch.

### Conclusion

1. Mitchell raises the question whether film is a purely visual media. See Mitchell, W. J. T. (2005) *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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- Dalla Nube alla Resisitenza* (1979) Dir. Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub. Italy: Ital-Noleggio Cinematografico.
- Fortini Cani* (1976) Dir. Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub. Italy, France & UK: Straub-Huillet with RAI; Sunchild Productions & Institut de l'Audiovisuel; New Yorker Films and Artificial Eye.

*Homage by Assanination* (1992) Dir. Elia Suleiman, Nazareth/U.S. IFC.

*Ixok- Woman* (1991) Dir. Wilma Kiener and Dieter Matzka. Germany: Matzka-Kiener Filmproduktion.

*London* (1994) Dir. Patrick Keiller. [DVD] UK: BFI.

*Man with a Movie Camera.* (1929) Dir. Dziga Vertov. USSR: VUFKU.

*Moi, un noir.* (1958) Dir. Jean Rouch Paris: Films de la Pléiade.

*News from Home* (1977) Dir. Chantal Akerman. France. France, Belgium and West Germany: Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA), Paradise Films, Unité Trois, Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF).

*Pineapple (Ananas)* (1983) Dir. Gitai Amos. [DVD]  
France/Israel/Sweden/Netherlands/Finland: Les Films d'ici, FR3; A.G. Productions; TV1; Ikon; TV2.

*Reassemblage* (1982) Dir. Trinh T. Minh-ha. USA/Senegal: Women Make Movies.

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*San Soleil* (1982) Dir. Chris Marker. France: New Yorker Films.

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France/Egypt: Straub-Huillet.

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